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OLIVER GOLDSMITH

A BIOGRAPHY

IRVING

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OLIVER GOLDSMITH

After the painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds, in the National Portrait Gallery

IRVING'S

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

A BIOGRAPHY

EDITED
WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES
BY

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TO

JAMES MORGAN HART

BY WHOM THE EDITOR HAS BEEN LED

TO A

FINER APPRECIATION

OF

WASHINGTON IRVING

PREFACE

The introductory matter in this volume aims to induce in the average high-school pupil the right attitude with which to begin reading the biography. The annotation is thought to be not over-elaborate nor too scant. The student is encouraged to work out for himself points the significance of which he might miss without aid. (See remarks at the top of page 355.) The topics and questions, which are inserted at the ends of the chapters, will accomplish their purpose if they arouse a class to enthusiastic discussion of the biography or direct the individual reader to a clear and comprehensive view of Irving's work. The chronological table is meant for reference. Included in the table are the dates of issue of the college entrance texts published during the period 1728–1859.

The editor has kept in mind throughout the book the fact that this biography is set down in the college entrance list for reading rather than study. Nevertheless, he has believed that probably most school courses will devote a month to the *Oliver Goldsmith*, and that in such cases the line between reading and study ought not to be sharply drawn. If so much time is allowed, this edition will suggest ways of spending it advantageously. If less time is apportioned to the

volume, the topics and questions and the notes regarding Irving's vocabulary need not be considered fully.

The text is, in the main, that of a late authorized edition published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, who have obligingly granted permission to reprint. Some of the differences noted between the latest text and the first edition are mentioned on page 363. The three different biographies of Goldsmith by Irving are described in the footnote, page xii.

BROOKLYN, September 16, 1903.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION: PAGE

I. IRVING AND HIS *OLIVER GOLDSMITH* xi

II. CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE xxiv

III. NOTE CONCERNING THE TOPICS AND QUESTIONS xxix

AUTHOR'S PREFACE 3

OLIVER GOLDSMITH: A BIOGRAPHY 5

GENERAL TOPICS 351

NOTES 355

INTRODUCTION

I. IRVING AND HIS *OLIVER GOLDSMITH*

It might seem a remarkable fact that in 1848, when he was over sixty years old, Washington Irving thought his popularity as a writer had ended, but that only a few years later, after the republication of his works had been undertaken by Mr. George P. Putnam, large sums were made from the widely extending sale. Yet this feeling of the author is perfectly natural when the characteristics of the man are considered. Irving was of a shrinking, delicately grained disposition. His life from beginning to end was marked by unobtrusive attention to letters, and his years of maturity were made notable by a sunny, wholesome, literary productiveness.

The strange thing might seem to be that a man of so well-regulated a life as Irving's could sympathize with an Oliver Goldsmith, palliate his many heedless blunders, and even apologize for his apparently inexcusable irregularities. Irving had so hearty a regard for the subject of his biography that it is doubtful whether any person not already hopelessly callous can close the volume without sharing in the author's bias toward the gifted but unfortunate poet, essayist, novelist, and writer of dramas, "Poor Goldsmith." It will be of interest to find out, first, what started Irving into the project of a biography of Goldsmith; in the second place, how long he was in completing the work; thirdly, what success the book met; fourthly, what incidents in his career and what characteristics of his genius corresponded, however slightly, with those in the life and character of

Goldsmith; and, lastly, what was the general course of Irving's tranquil literary life. Answers to these questions will explain sufficiently what should be known about Irving by every school reader of the *Oliver Goldsmith*.

The first three queries may be answered quite briefly. The biography of Washington Irving by his nephew, Mr. Pierre M. Irving, throws light on the subject. In August, 1849, Washington Irving called at the office of his nephew, and "speaking of his fagging at the *Life of Goldsmith*,[1] two or three chapters of which he had still to write, said that it had taken more time than he could afford — had plucked the heart out of his summer; and after all he could only play with the subject. He had no time to finish it off as he wished." Irving was at this time making a revised edition of his works and had brought out all but two volumes, *A Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada* and *The Alhambra*. Yet he had interrupted the preparation of this new edition and the composition of his *Life of Washington* in order to take up the Goldsmith. "It was a sudden literary freak," says Pierre Irving, "similar to that which had induced him, when first in Spain, to break off from *Columbus* in order to begin the chronicles of Granada, and had subsequently drawn him aside to his Moorish Chronicles."

[1] This title, which is a handy designation chosen by Washington Irving's nephew and which is the form usually quoted, is inaccurate. Washington Irving wrote, besides an inconsequential abridgment published in Paris in 1825 and in Philadelphia in 1830, two distinct biographies of Goldsmith. The first, entitled, *The Life of Oliver Goldsmith*, was published in 1840 (Harper & Bros.); it is part of an 18mo two-volume edition of Goldsmith's writings. The "biographical sketch," as it is called in the table of contents, contains one hundred seventy-nine pages, not divided into chapters. The second, published in 1849 (Geo. P. Putnam), is entitled *Oliver Goldsmith: A Biography*. This is the book included in the uniform entrance requirements for 1906, 1907, and 1908. It is, in the first edition, a 12mo volume of three hundred eighty-two pages, divided into forty-five chapters. Copies of both these books have been used freely by the present editor in the Astor Library, to the officers of which institution, especially Mr. L. S. Judd, acknowledgments are gratefully made for numerous courtesies.

This "sudden freak" to take up the life of Goldsmith had its origin in the interest which Irving took in Forster's biography of Goldsmith. One day when Irving was looking at Forster's new book, in the office of Mr. George P. Putnam, he said that he believed he would himself write a life of Goldsmith. He had previously, in 1825, made, as he says himself, "a mere modification of an interesting Scottish memoir" of Goldsmith for a Paris edition of Goldsmith's works, and this sketch had already in America been completely rewritten and prefixed to selections from Goldsmith in Harper's "Family Library." It was therefore not difficult for the author to get to work on the proposed larger biography, which the publisher heartily urged him to undertake. Inside of two months, says Mr. Putnam, the first sheets of the *Oliver Goldsmith* were in the printer's hands, and the volume was published in two or three weeks.

When the book came out, Mr. Pierre Irving congratulated his uncle on the quality of his work, whereupon Washington Irving replied that he had been afraid to look at it since completion, because he had never done anything else in such a hurry. He felt that he ought to have had more time for it. He complained that he had knocked off the work in an offhand manner which was not characteristic of most of his writing.

Though written hurriedly, the *Oliver Goldsmith* had an immediate and wide popularity. A first edition of twenty-five hundred was all disposed of by September 19, 1849, and a second edition of two thousand was well under way. Highly commendatory reviews were partly responsible for this success. In a review published by the *Tribune*, Mr. George Ripley, the literary editor of that paper, said among other things, "With a genial admiration of Goldsmith, with a cordial appreciation of the spirit of his writings, and with many similar intellectual tendencies, Irving has portrayed the varied picture of Goldsmith's life with a grace and elegance that

make his narrative as charming a piece of composition as can be found in the whole range of his former works." In conclusion Mr. Ripley added that there could not be a more admirable description of the influence of Irving's own writings than that author had given of Goldsmith in the opening paragraph of the biography. When reviews like these were freely contributed to contemporary periodicals, it is no wonder that the volume was an immediate success from the point of view of the publisher.

Why, in the fourth place, the sage of Sunnyside was able to write successfully the life of Oliver Goldsmith is not difficult to understand. Irving had sympathy and penetration. His knack for catching the spirit of the life of any character in whom he was interested was remarkable. Even in the case of Columbus and Washington, about the details of whose lives much has been learned by the painstaking historians of later years, Irving was able to comprehend the essential man and to present a faithful and true conception. In his *Oliver Goldsmith*, also, by this same insight into human motives, Irving has presented a picture that remains an adequate and trustworthy delineation of the man Oliver Goldsmith, even though later biographers may have added a few details regarding the mere facts in his life.

There were, too, a few special reasons, due to similarity of temperament and external circumstance, why Irving wrote sympathetically and understandingly concerning Goldsmith. Both were men who shrunk from giving pain to others, who unconsciously imparted good humor and kindliness to any circle in which they happened to be. Yet both were modest and rather retiring in company. Neither had the slightest taste for political life. Both were of an independent spirit. "Who does not admire the sturdy independence of poor Goldsmith toiling in his garret for nine guineas the job?" says Irving, in Chapter XXI of his biography, regarding

the rejection by Goldsmith of a tempting offer to earn liberal pay by writing for the party of Lord North. Again, both were of generous instincts. To be sure, Irving was the better balanced; he knew better how to control his impulses. It was the lack of balance which made glaring defects in Goldsmith's character. Yet in all these respects the authors had similar tendencies in character.

In external circumstances, the superficial points of difference appear more striking than those of resemblance. Goldsmith and Irving, for example, both traveled widely on the Continent, but there was a vast difference in the circumstances of their travels. Goldsmith journeyed through many cities and towns on foot and penniless, gaining his subsistence by means of his songs and his flute, or stopping at universities to dispute for a dinner and a night's lodging with any who would offer themselves as disputants. In this manner, according to his biographers, though the facts cannot be proved by indisputable records, he made his way first through Flanders and northern France, and then from Marseilles through part of southern France and Piedmont and some of the Italian states. Irving, on the other hand, journeyed here and there on the Continent in comfortable circumstances and, at one period of his life, with the recognition everywhere that comes to a diplomatist in the service of a powerful government. The contrast between Irving's journey from Madrid to Versailles in 1843, and Goldsmith's wandering journey of 1755 is remarkable. Irving's quiet, happy journey is seen from such extracts as this from a letter to one of his nieces: "I must tell you that I have thus far enjoyed my journey extremely. I do not know when scenery had a more vivifying effect on my feelings than in passing from the dreary, parched wastes of the Castles to the green mountains and valleys of the Basque provinces. The nights were superb, a full moon lighting up splendid

mountain scenery; the air bland, and fresh, and balmy, instead of the parching airs of Madrid. The first sight of the sea, too, and the inhaling of the sea-breeze, brought a home feeling that was quite reviving. You cannot imagine how beautiful France looks to me, with her orchards and vineyards, and groves, and green meadows, after naked, sterile Spain. I feel confident I shall return from this excursion with a stock of health and good spirits to carry me through the winter." Of similar tone is this extract three months later, on his return to Madrid: "I arrived in Madrid about ten days since, after a somewhat rapid journey; *but I had the mail carriage to myself, and was enabled to make myself comfortable.*" And this: "I was cordially welcomed back by my brother diplomatists, and really had a home feeling on finding myself once more among them." Contrast these with Goldsmith's account of his journey of 1755 seen in the passage from *The Traveller*, quoted at the end of Chapter XV of Irving's *Oliver Goldsmith*, and in the various passages of *The Vicar of Wakefield* which Irving regards as autobiographical, though William Black, in the English Men of Letters, *Goldsmith* (page 17), remarks that the adventures described in Chapter XX of *The Vicar of Wakefield* cannot be assumed without question to be drawn from Goldsmith's own life. On the whole, with respect to external conditions, as seen in travel abroad, Irving would hardly be expected to comprehend Goldsmith.

There is, nevertheless, a basis for sympathy even in the matter of their travels. The mere fact of Irving's having gained the wider knowledge of life which is secured best by extensive travel would prevent him from taking a purely insular and prejudiced view of Goldsmith. His residence also for a considerable time in England and his familiarity there with the haunts of Goldsmith would help to let him into the secrets of Goldsmith's life.

In another respect the two men were entirely similar in the externals of life. Neither married. Irving sorrowed deeply over the death of her whom he loved when he was a young man, and always remained true to the love of his early manhood. Goldsmith, after he had won success as an author, became tenderly attached to a beautiful young woman, to whom his devotion was steadfast. This likeness in celibacy probably accounts for the nature of numerous references to the Jessamy Bride in Irving's biography of Goldsmith, and constitutes a bond of sympathy between the two men.

Finally, in the consideration of the one question that remains of the five asked at the beginning, there may be presented a short narrative of the life of Irving as an author, not intended in any sense to take the place of a reading of the biography by Charles Dudley Warner, or of the somewhat discursive, but thoroughly entertaining *Life and Letters of Irving* by Pierre M. Irving.

Washington Irving, named after George Washington, whom the patriot father of Washington Irving greatly admired, was born in New York, April 3, 1783, at a time when the center of population was near Trinity Church, when Chambers Street was at the edge of the thickly settled portion of the city, and when there were no authors of distinction in America. For the city of his birth he always had a warm affection. While in Paris in 1824 he longed to be once more in New York, and wrote to a friend, "There is a charm about that little spot of earth, that beautiful city and its environs, that has a perfect spell over my imagination. The bay, the rivers and their wild and woody shores, the haunts of my boyhood, both on land and water, absolutely have a witchery over my mind. I thank God for my having been born in so beautiful a place, among such beautiful scenery; I am convinced I owe a vast deal of what is good and pleasant in my

nature to the circumstance." To the New Yorker it is a source of pride that Irving in the later years of his life was not without honor in his native city — he refused a nomination for Mayor — and that at the present time the general esteem in which his memory is held has led to the erection of a statue in one of the most beautiful spots of New York City.

From 1802, when he first began to write, until 1818, when the Irving brothers went into bankruptcy in London, the story of Washington Irving's life has to do merely with the trifling, unsettled experiments of a sociably inclined young bachelor. His first venture as an author was a series of letters signed "Jonathan Oldstyle," contributed to the *Morning Chronicle*. These, although they were plainly imitations of the *Spectator* essays, attracted considerable attention. They consisted of satirical comments on theaters and actors and on plays that were presented at the time in New York. Irving had become a law clerk in the office of Josiah Ogden Hoffman, but felt little inclination for serious study of the law. He was weakly in body. He liked excursions in the Hudson River region and up the Mohawk better than the reading of law books. In spite of much outdoor life he remained in poor health, so that his brothers, who were prospering in business, sent him abroad in 1804. The captain of the sailing vessel on which he took passage remarked on seeing the young man's consumptive look, "There 's a chap who will go overboard before we get across." Instead, he grew somewhat better, and spent nearly two years in Europe. He traveled with much enjoyment through France, Italy, the Netherlands, and England, without making any contributions to literature. He returned to New York in February, 1806.

For nine years he remained in America, and in an offhand, casual mode turned out some of his best writings.

During these years he was a favorite in the society of Baltimore, Washington, Albany, and New York. He experimented with his pen as a means of diversion rather than as a settled occupation; he had not yet made up his mind to take authorship seriously as a profession. Among the works of these nine years are his writings in *Salmagundi*, a periodical the purpose of which was "to instruct the young, reform the old, correct the town, and castigate the age." *Salmagundi* was astonishingly popular, considering the careless air of superiority which marked its utterances. In this periodical Irving was associated with his brother William and with his friend Paulding. In 1809 he published in Philadelphia *A History of New York*, by Diedrich Knickerbocker, his most original work. It won him instant popularity as an author. It had no value as an accurate picture of the Dutch in New York, but it came in the course of time somehow to be considered a faithful delineation of early Dutch manners. Its all-pervasive humor has not yet lost its savor. He wrote nothing else of importance during this period, but for the most part spent his time easily in social pleasures, though he gave some slight attention to the business affairs of his brothers. In 1815 he sailed again for Europe, where he remained seventeen years. The death of Miss Matilda Hoffman, whom he loved, may perhaps account for the checking of his literary effort in the years that followed the publication of the *History of New York*.

After his arrival in England, he struggled during the next two or three years with business matters, mainly in London, doing his best to assist his invalid brother, Peter, in the reverses which overtook the commercial house in which the brothers were partners. The time passed drearily. "His letters for two years are burdened with harassments in uncongenial details and unsuccessful struggles." He had no more liking for the details of business life than had

Nathaniel Hawthorne, who, it will be recalled, made his escape about twenty-five years later from his position in the Boston Custom House as from a prison.

In August, 1818, after Washington and Peter Irving had taken advantage of the bankruptcy law in London, Washington, at the age of thirty-five, settled definitely on literature as a profession. From now until 1826, he wrote whenever he was strong enough and was in the mood, completing in this time several of his most characteristically humorous works. His *Sketch-Book* was published both in America and in England. From the publisher, Murray, he received two hundred pounds for the English copyright. Everywhere he was welcomed with honor. To his joy he became the breadwinner of the Irving brothers. He, who before had been merely the dabbler, was now recognized by the family as the effective worker. His travels at this period included journeys to Dresden and Paris with somewhat prolonged stays. Carlyle says that Irving was a good deal of a lion in Paris. His reputation reached everywhere. The *Edinburgh Review* hailed him as a writer of "great purity and beauty of diction." All English people were reading his latest book. In Italy, an English lady and her daughter stopped in one of the galleries before a bust of General Washington. "Who was this Washington?" asked the daughter. "Why, the author of the *Sketch-Book*, of course," answered the mother. Irving's friends and acquaintances included most of the well-known English writers of the early nineteenth century; Sir Walter Scott was a particularly enthusiastic admirer. After the *Sketch-Book* came, in 1822, *Bracebridge Hall*, which added to Irving's English reputation. In 1824 there was published a collection of short sketches, *Tales of a Traveller*, in which some of Irving's best work appeared; certainly the "artistic" touch which he himself felt to be here is present, and makes this group of little stories deservedly popular to-day. Still,

some of the critics began to ask for something of a new style from Irving.

This the distinguished author, always sensitive to the slightest adverse criticism, undertook to furnish in his *History of the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*, for the writing of which he qualified himself thoroughly by a residence at Madrid from February, 1826, to September, 1829. The publisher Murray paid Irving thirty-one hundred and fifty pounds for the English copyright of the life of Columbus, which was published in February, 1828. Other books during this most productive period were *Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada* and *Voyages of the Companions of Columbus*. Irving wrote also *The Alhambra* at this time, but it was not published till later. The volume on the conquest of Granada brought the author two thousand guineas. The letters during this Madrid residence reveal the customary delightful social relations into which Irving entered wherever he happened to be, and make clear how completely and with what zest the author entered into the spirit of old Spain.

Urged by his friends, Irving accepted the appointment of Secretary of Legation to the Court of St. James and once more returned to London. Oxford conferred upon him the degree of D.C.L., but modest Irving never made use of this adornment. In the course of his residence in England as Secretary of Legation, he appears to have taken more interest in politics than ever before; he wanted to know the latest news regarding political events in all countries and watched the newspapers eagerly for the latest developments. When the Reform Bill was up for consideration in Parliament he earnestly hoped it would pass. Two literary incidents shortly before his return to America were a second visit to Stratford and a last talk with Sir Walter Scott, who said to him, "The times are changed, my good fellow, since

we went over the Eildon Hills together. It is all nonsense to tell a man that his mind is not affected when his body is in this state." It was not long before the valiant struggle of Scott against disease had ended. Irving, however, returned to America before the death of his generous admirer and friend.

In May, 1832, Irving was royally welcomed to New York. Public dinners were given in his honor; authors, business men, and men prominent in political life vied with one another in paying tribute to the most distinguished American author of the day, who had been absent from his native country seventeen years, during which he had won international reputation. Irving's mind had been for some time set upon a return to New York. He longed for a home in which he could gather his brothers and their children in domestic comfort and happiness. Soon he chose the "Sunnyside" farm which is now the goal for literary pilgrimages. At Sunnyside he brought together the Irving family, and Sunnyside became, in the words of Charles Dudley Warner, "the dearest spot on earth to him; it was his residence, from which he tore himself with reluctance, and to which he returned with eager longing; and here, surrounded by relatives whom he loved, he passed nearly all the remainder of his years, in as happy conditions, I think, as a bachelor ever enjoyed." He took the greatest pleasure in enlarging the buildings, in improving the grounds, in making the house and the surroundings more and more comfortable and beautiful. In fact, because he spent so much money in this agreeable work and because he never seems to have known in just what enterprises it was well to invest his earnings, he had to devote himself to writing all the rest of his life.

Among the works that brought him substantial sums after his return to America were *Tour on the Prairies*, the

outcome of an extended journey as far west as Arkansas, *Recollections of Abbotsford and Newstead Abbey*, *Legends of the Conquest of Spain*, *Astoria*, *Oliver Goldsmith*, and *Mahomet and his Successors*. It will be noticed that, although these are noteworthy volumes, there is no work here by which Irving is popularly known. The time of his most distinctive productiveness was nearly over; there remained only one notable book to complete, his *Life of Washington*. This was long delayed.

In accordance with his ingrained aversion to party honors, he had rejected an offer of the secretaryship of the Navy under President Van Buren, but permitted himself to be appointed, in 1842, minister to Spain. This honor he accepted as a recognition by his countrymen of his contributions to the history of Spain. The nomination was made at the suggestion of Daniel Webster, was heartily supported by Henry Clay, and was confirmed by the votes of both parties. His residence abroad at this time lasted till 1846, when he returned for good. His services as a diplomatist in a quiet way were most effective.

Little needs to be said regarding the last happy years at Sunnyside. If the student is wont to feel from reading the lives of many English authors that the lot of a writer — as in the cases of Goldsmith, Johnson, Burns, and even Scott — is at best but a hard struggle, ended with ease and comfort far in the distance, certainly it is a refreshing contrast to learn of the happy domestic tranquillity of Irving's last years at Sunnyside. He was admired by his fellow-citizens, adored by his kin. His strength was failing, yet he kept writing, and he had the triumphant pleasure of seeing the *Life of Washington* well received. He died at Sunnyside, November 28, 1859, in the seventy-seventh year of a happy, perhaps not virile, but unquestionably productive and honorable life.

II. CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE, 1728–1859

Oliver Goldsmith	English Literary History	American Literary History
1728. Born at Pallas, Ireland.	1728. Gay, *Beggar's Opera;* Pope, *Dunciad;* Thomson, *Spring.*	1728. Cotton Mather. Died. A magazine founded by Franklin.
		1733. Franklin, *Poor Richard's Almanac.*
1734–1745. School days at Lissoy, Athlone, and Edgeworthstown.	1735. Johnson, *Translation of Lobo's Voyage to Abyssinia.* (His first work.)	1736. Mather Byles, Poems.
	1743. Burke. Entered Trinity.	1743. Blair, founder of William and Mary College. Died.
1745. Entered Trinity College, Dublin.	1742–1745. Young, *Night Thoughts.*	
	1748. Richardson, *Clarissa Harlowe;* Smollett, *Roderick Random.*	1748. Eliot, *An Essay on Field Husbandry in New England.*
1749. Received A.B. at Trinity.	1749. Fielding, *Tom Jones.*	
	1751. Gray, *Elegy.*	
1752. Arrived in Edinburgh.		1752. Freneau, poet and journalist. Born.
		1754. Edwards, *Inquiry into the Freedom of the Will.*
1755. Roving about the Continent.	1755. Johnson, *Dictionary.*	
1756. First venture into London.	1758. Johnson, *The Idler;* Robertson, *History of Scotland.*	1758. Godfrey, *The Prince of Parthia* (written).
1757. Contributor to *Monthly Review.*		
1758. Rejected by College of Surgeons.	1759–1760. Sterne, *Tristram Shandy.*	
1761. Meeting with Johnson.	1761–1764. Churchill, Poems.	
1762. Moved to Islington.	1762. Macpherson, *Ossian.*	
1763. Acquaintance with Boswell begun.		
1764. Johnson Club formed; *The Traveller.*		

1765. *Essays by Mr. Goldsmith.* (Collection of newspaper and magazine tales and essays.)	1765. Blackstone, *Commentaries;* Percy, *Reliques of Ancient Poetry;* Walpole, *Castle of Otranto.*	
1766. *The Vicar of Wakefield.*		
1767. *The Good-natured Man.*		
1768. Summer in suburban cottage.	1768. Gray, Poems.	
1769. At work on *Roman History* and *History of Animated Nature;* nominated honorary professor of history in Royal Academy.	1769–1772. Letters of Junius.	
1770. *The Deserted Village.*	1770. Burke, *Thoughts on the Present Discontents.*	
1771. "Natural History" about "half-finished."	1771. Smollett, *Humphrey Clinker.*	1771. C. B. Brown. Born.
1772. Befriended M'Donnell; returned to London, from summer in the country, with health disordered.		
1773. *She Stoops to Conquer* (performed); received pay in advance for *Grecian History.*	1773. Ferguson, Poems.	
1774. Toiled at various book-making tasks; took to bed, 25 March, and died in convulsions, 4 April.	1774. Burke, *Speech on American Taxation.*	1774. Jefferson, *A Summary View of the Rights of British America;* Hamilton, Pamphlets vindicating claims of the colonies; Dwight, *The Conquest of Canaan* (written).
	1775. Burke, *Speech on Conciliation with America.*	

Washington Irving	English Literary History	American Literary History
1783. Born at New York.		
		1789. Franklin, *Autobiography.*
	1791. Boswell, *Life of Johnson.*	
	1793. Burns, Poems.	
	1798. Coleridge, *The Ancient Mariner.*	1798. Hopkinson, *Hail Columbia.*
1804–1806. First European journey.		
1807. *Salmagundi.*	1807. Wordsworth, Poems.	
1809. *Knickerbocker's History of New York.*	1809. Tennyson. Born.	
	1810. Scott, *The Lady of the Lake.*	
	1812–1818. Byron, *Childe Harold.*	
1815. Second voyage to Europe.		
	1817. Moore, *Lalla Rookh;* Keats, Poems.	1817. Bryant, *Thanatopsis.*
1818. Failure of business firm, and choice of literature as profession.		
1819–20. *The Sketch-Book.*	1819. Scott, *Ivanhoe.*	1819. Halleck and Drake, *Croaker Poems.*
	1820. Shelley, *Prometheus Unbound.*	
	1821. De Quincey, *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater.*	1821. Cooper, *The Spy.*
1822. *Bracebridge Hall.*	1822–1824. Lamb, *Essays of Elia.*	
1824. *Tales of a Traveller.*		
		1825. D. Webster, *First Bunker Hill Oration.*

1826–1828. Residence in Spain.	1827. H. Hallam, *Constitutional History of England.*	1827. Poe, *Tamerlane.*
1828. *The Life of Columbus.*	1828. Carlyle, *Essay on Burns.*	1828. N. Webster, *Dictionary.*
1829. *The Conquest of Granada.*		
1831. *The Voyages of the Companions of Columbus.*		1831. Whittier, *Legends of New England;* Paulding, *The Dutchman's Fireside.*
1832. Return to New York.	1832. A. H. Hallam. Graduated from Cambridge.	
		1833. C. F. Hoffman, *A Winter in the West.*
1835. Purchase of Sunnyside; *The Crayon Miscellany.* Elected Regent of the University of the State of New York.	1835. Southey. Received pension.	1835. Willis, *Pencillings by the Way.*
1836. *Astoria.*	1836–1837. Dickens, *Pickwick Papers.*	1836. Emerson, *Nature;* Holmes, *Poetry, a Metrical Essay.*
1837. *Captain Bonneville.*	1837. Carlyle, *French Revolution.*	1837. Hawthorne, *Twice-Told Tales.* (First volume.)
1842. Resigned as Regent.		
1842–1846. Third voyage to Europe. (Minister to Spain.)	1843. Macaulay, *Essay on Addison.*	
	1843–1860. Ruskin, *Modern Painters.*	
	1847–1848. Thackeray, *Vanity Fair.*	1848. Lowell, *The Vision of Sir Launfal.*
1849. *Oliver Goldsmith.*	1849. Tennyson, *In Memoriam.*	1849. Parkman, *The Oregon Trail.*
1849–1850. *Mahomet and his Successors.*		1850. Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter;* Mitchell, *Reveries of a Bachelor.*
		1852. Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin.*

Washington Irving	English Literary History	American Literary History
		1854. Thoreau, *Walden.*
1855. *Wolfert's Roost.*	1855. Arnold, Poems.	1855. Whitman, *Leaves of Grass;* Longfellow, *The Song of Hiawatha.*
1855–1859. *The Life of Washington.*	1856. Macaulay, *Life of Johnson.*	1856. Curtis, *Prue and I;* Motley, *The Rise of the Dutch Republic.*
	1858. George Eliot, *Adam Bede.*	
1859. Death at Sunnyside.	1859. Tennyson, First four *Idylls of the King;* Darwin, *Origin of Species.*	1859. Whittier, *Home Ballads and Poems.*

III. NOTE CONCERNING THE TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

The topics and questions in this edition are intended primarily to furnish a basis for lively and entertaining discussions in class. Very likely not every pupil will be able to answer every question or discuss every topic. Yet it is thought that by topics such as these all the pupils will gain a thorough knowledge of the contents of Irving's *Oliver Goldsmith*, and that at the same time they will have pleasure from the study. There is no reason why oral and written composition based on a charming piece of literature like the *Oliver Goldsmith* should not be entered upon by the preparatory-school student with enthusiasm, and continued throughout with cumulative zeal. Though the material offered for the study will be found most satisfactory for class use where one pupil will be familiar with the subject-matter of one topic, another pupil with that of another topic, the questions and topics are such that a student might read the book by himself and find sufficient direction for a thorough and enjoyable reading.

In the study of these topics and questions, it is hoped that the pupil will have access to at least the following books: — Goldsmith's complete works; H. A. Dobson's *Life of Goldsmith;* Boswell's *Life of Johnson;* Histories of English and American Literature; Encyclopædia or *Century Dictionary of Names;* a biographical dictionary, as for example Lippincott's; *The Life and Letters of Irving*, by Pierre M. Irving; and Irving's complete works. If, in addition, the student can have the pleasure of consulting Irving's principal sources, he will count himself fortunate. These sources are *The Life of Oliver Goldsmith*, by James Prior, in two volumes (London, John Murray, 1837); and *The Life and Adventures of Oliver Goldsmith*, by John Forster, in four books (London, Bradbury and Evans, 1848). Unfortunately not many libraries contain these interesting old books, though later editions are sometimes available.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

A BIOGRAPHY

By WASHINGTON IRVING

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

In the course of a revised edition of my works I have come to a biographical sketch of Goldsmith, published several years since. It was written hastily, as introductory to a selection from his writings; and, though the facts contained in it were collected from various sources, I was chiefly indebted for them to the voluminous work of Mr. James Prior, who had collected and collated the most minute particulars of the poet's history with unwearied research and scrupulous fidelity; but had rendered them, as I thought, in a form too cumbrous and overlaid with details and disquisitions, and matters uninteresting to the general reader.

When I was about of late to revise my biographical sketch, preparatory to republication, a volume was put into my hands, recently given to the public by Mr. John Forster, of the Inner Temple, who, likewise availing himself of the labors of the indefatigable Prior, and of a few new lights since evolved, has produced a biography of the poet, executed with a spirit, a feeling, a grace, and an eloquence, that leave nothing to be desired. Indeed it would have been presumption in me to undertake the subject after it had been thus felicitously treated, did I not stand committed by my previous sketch. That sketch now appeared too meagre and insufficient to satisfy public demand; yet it had to take its place in the revised series of my works unless something more satisfactory could be substituted. Under these circumstances I have again taken up the subject, and gone into it with more fulness than formerly, omitting none of the facts which I considered illustrative of the life and character

of the poet, and giving them in as graphic a style as I could command. Still the hurried manner in which I have had to do this amidst the pressure of other claims on my attention, and with the press dogging at my heels, has prevented me from giving some parts of the subject the thorough handling I could have wished. Those who would like to see it treated still more at large, with the addition of critical disquisitions and the advantage of collateral facts, would do well to refer themselves to Mr. Prior's circumstantial volumes, or to the elegant and discursive pages of Mr. Forster.

For my own part, I can only regret my shortcomings in what to me is a labor of love; for it is a tribute of gratitude to the memory of an author whose writings were the delight of my childhood, and have been a source of enjoyment to me throughout life; and to whom, of all others, I may address the beautiful apostrophe of Dante to Virgil, —

> Tu se' lo mio maestro, e 'l mio autore :
> Tu se' solo colui, da cu' io tolsi
> Lo bello stile, che m' ha fatto onore.

W. I.

Sunnyside, August 1, 1849.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

CHAPTER I

Birth and Parentage — Characteristics of the Goldsmith Race — Poetical Birthplace — Goblin House — Scenes of Boyhood — Lissoy — Picture of a Country Parson — Goldsmith's Schoolmistress — Byrne, the Village Schoolmaster — Goldsmith's Hornpipe and Epigram — Uncle Contarine — School Studies and School Sports — Mistakes of a Night.

There are few writers for whom the reader feels such personal kindness as for Oliver Goldsmith, for few have so eminently possessed the magic gift of identifying themselves with their writings. We read his character in every page, and grow into familiar intimacy with him as we read. The artless benevolence that beams throughout his works; the whimsical, yet amiable views of human life and human nature; the unforced humor, blending so happily with good feeling and good sense, and singularly dashed at times with a pleasing melancholy; even the very nature of his mellow, and flowing, and softly-tinted style, — all seem to bespeak his moral as well as his intellectual qualities, and make us love the man at the same time that we admire the author. While the productions of writers of loftier pretension and more sounding names are suffered to moulder on our shelves, those of Goldsmith are cherished and laid in our bosoms. We do not quote them with ostentation, but they mingle with our minds, sweeten our tempers, and harmonize our thoughts; they put us in good-humor with ourselves and with the world, and in so doing they make us happier and better men.

An acquaintance with the private biography of Goldsmith lets us into the secret of his gifted pages. We there discover them to be little more than transcripts of his own heart and picturings of his fortunes. There he shows himself the same kind, artless, good-humored, excursive, sensible, whimsical, intelligent being that he appears in his writings. Scarcely an adventure or character is given in his works that may not be traced to his own parti-colored story. Many of his most ludicrous scenes and ridiculous incidents have been drawn from his own blunders and mischances, and he seems really to have been buffeted into almost every maxim imparted by him for the instruction of his reader.

Oliver Goldsmith was born on the 10th of November, 1728, at the hamlet of Pallas, or Pallasmore, county of Longford, in Ireland. He sprang from a respectable, but by no means a thrifty stock. Some families seem to inherit kindliness and incompetency, and to hand down virtue and poverty from generation to generation. Such was the case with the Goldsmiths. "They were always," according to their own accounts, "a strange family; they rarely acted like other people; their hearts were in the right place, but their heads seemed to be doing anything but what they ought." — "They were remarkable," says another statement, "for their worth, but of no cleverness in the ways of the world." Oliver Goldsmith will be found faithfully to inherit the virtues and weaknesses of his race.

His father, the Rev. Charles Goldsmith, with hereditary improvidence, married when very young and very poor, and starved along for several years on a small country curacy and the assistance of his wife's friends. His whole income, eked out by the produce of some fields which he farmed, and of some occasional duties performed for his wife's uncle, the rector of an adjoining parish, did not exceed forty pounds.

"And passing rich with forty pounds a year."

He inhabited an old, half rustic mansion, that stood on a rising ground in a rough, lonely part of the country, overlooking a low tract occasionally flooded by the river Inny. In this house Goldsmith was born, and it was a birthplace worthy of a poet; for, by all accounts, it was haunted ground. A tradition handed down among the neighboring peasantry states that, in after-years, the house, remaining for some time untenanted, went to decay, the roof fell in, and it became so lonely and forlorn as to be a resort for the "good people" or fairies, who in Ireland are supposed to delight in old, crazy, deserted mansions for their midnight revels. All attempts to repair it were in vain; the fairies battled stoutly to maintain possession. A huge misshapen hobgoblin used to bestride the house every evening with an immense pair of jackboots, which, in his efforts at hard riding, he would thrust through the roof, kicking to pieces all the work of the preceding day. The house was therefore left to its fate, and went to ruin.

Such is the popular tradition about Goldsmith's birthplace. About two years after his birth a change came over the circumstances of his father. By the death of his wife's uncle he succeeded to the rectory of Kilkenny West; and, abandoning the old goblin mansion, he removed to Lissoy, in the county of Westmeath, where he occupied a farm of seventy acres, situated on the skirts of that pretty little village.

This was the scene of Goldsmith's boyhood, the little world whence he drew many of those pictures, rural and domestic, whimsical and touching, which abound throughout his works, and which appeal so eloquently both to the fancy and the heart. Lissoy is confidently cited as the original of his "Auburn" in the "Deserted Village"; his father's establishment, a mixture of farm and parsonage, furnished hints, it is said, for the rural economy of the "Vicar of

Wakefield"; and his father himself, with his learned simplicity, his guileless wisdom, his amiable piety, and utter ignorance of the world, has been exquisitely portrayed in the worthy Dr. Primrose. Let us pause for a moment, and draw from Goldsmith's writings one or two of those pictures which, under feigned names, represent his father and his family, and the happy fireside of his childish days.

"My father," says the "Man in Black," who, in some respects, is a counterpart of Goldsmith himself,—"my father, the younger son of a good family, was possessed of a small living in the church. His education was above his fortune, and his generosity greater than his education. Poor as he was, he had his flatterers poorer than himself: for every dinner he gave them, they returned him an equivalent in praise; and this was all he wanted. The same ambition that actuates a monarch at the head of his army, influenced my father at the head of his table; he told the story of the ivy-tree, and that was laughed at; he repeated the jest of the two scholars and one pair of breeches, and the company laughed at that; but the story of Taffy in the sedan-chair was sure to set the table in a roar. Thus his pleasure increased in proportion to the pleasure he gave; he loved all the world, and he fancied all the world loved him.

"As his fortune was but small, he lived up to the very extent of it: he had no intention of leaving his children money, for that was dross; he resolved they should have learning, for learning, he used to observe, was better than silver or gold. For this purpose he undertook to instruct us himself, and took as much care to form our morals as to improve our understanding. We were told that universal benevolence was what first cemented society: we were taught to consider all the wants of mankind as our own; to regard the *human face divine* with affection and esteem; he wound us up to be mere machines of pity, and rendered us incapable

of withstanding the slightest impulse made either by real or fictitious distress. In a word, we were perfectly instructed in the art of giving away thousands before we were taught the necessary qualifications of getting a farthing."

In the "Deserted Village" we have another picture of his father and his father's fireside: —

> "His house was known to all the vagrant train,
> He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain;
> The long-remembered beggar was his guest,
> Whose beard, descending, swept his aged breast;
> The ruin'd spendthrift, now no longer proud,
> Claim'd kindred there, and had his claims allow'd;
> The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
> Sat by his fire, and talk'd the night away;
> Wept o'er his wounds, or tales of sorrow done,
> Shoulder'd his crutch, and show'd how fields were won.
> Pleased with his guests, the good man learned to glow,
> And quite forgot their vices in their woe;
> Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
> His pity gave ere charity began."

The family of the worthy pastor consisted of five sons and three daughters. Henry, the eldest, was the good man's pride and hope, and he tasked his slender means to the utmost in educating him for a learned and distinguished career. Oliver was the second son, and seven years younger than Henry, who was the guide and protector of his childhood, and to whom he was most tenderly attached throughout life.

Oliver's education began when he was about three years old; that is to say, he was gathered under the wings of one of those good old motherly dames, found in every village, who cluck together the whole callow brood of the neighborhood, to teach them their letters and keep them out of harm's way. Mistress Elizabeth Delap, for that was her name, flourished in this capacity for upward of fifty years, and it

was the pride and boast of her declining days, when nearly ninety years of age, that she was the first that had put a book (doubtless a hornbook) into Goldsmith's hands. Apparently he did not much profit by it, for she confessed he was one of the dullest boys she had ever dealt with, insomuch that she had sometimes doubted whether it was possible to make anything of him: a common case with imaginative children, who are apt to be beguiled from the dry abstractions of elementary study by the picturings of the fancy.

At six years of age he passed into the hands of the village schoolmaster, one Thomas (or, as he was commonly and irreverently named, Paddy) Byrne, a capital tutor for a poet. He had been educated for a pedagogue, but had enlisted in the army, served abroad during the wars of Queen Anne's time, and risen to the rank of quartermaster of a regiment in Spain. At the return of peace, having no longer exercise for the sword, he resumed the ferule, and drilled the urchin populace of Lissoy. Goldsmith is supposed to have had him and his school in view in the following sketch in his "Deserted Village":—

"Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way,
With blossom'd furze unprofitably gay,
There, in his noisy mansion, skill'd to rule,
The village master taught his little school;
A man severe he was, and stern to view,
I knew him well, and every truant knew:
Well had the boding tremblers learn'd to trace
The day's disasters in his morning face;
Full well they laugh'd with counterfeited glee
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;
Full well the busy whisper circling round,
Convey'd the dismal tidings when he frown'd:
Yet he was kind, or, if severe in aught,
The love he bore to learning was in fault;
The village all declared how much he knew,

'T was certain he could write, and cipher too;
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
And e'en the story ran that he could gauge:
In arguing, too, the parson own'd his skill,
For, e'en though vanquished, he could argue still;
While words of learned length and thund'ring sound
Amazed the gazing rustics, ranged around, —
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,
That one small head could carry all he knew."

There are certain whimsical traits in the character of Byrne, not given in the foregoing sketch. He was fond of talking of his vagabond wanderings in foreign lands, and had brought with him from the wars a world of campaigning stories, of which he was generally the hero, and which he would deal forth to his wondering scholars when he ought to have been teaching them their lessons. These travellers' tales had a powerful effect upon the vivid imagination of Goldsmith, and awakened an unconquerable passion for wandering and seeking adventure.

Byrne was, moreover, of a romantic vein, and exceedingly superstitious. He was deeply versed in the fairy superstitions which abound in Ireland, all which he professed implicitly to believe. Under his tuition Goldsmith soon became almost as great a proficient in fairy lore. From this branch of good-for-nothing knowledge, his studies, by an easy transition, extended to the histories of robbers, pirates, smugglers, and the whole race of Irish rogues and rapparees. Everything, in short, that savored of romance, fable, and adventure, was congenial to his poetic mind, and took instant root there; but the slow plants of useful knowledge were apt to be overrun, if not choked, by the weeds of his quick imagination.

Another trait of his motley preceptor, Byrne, was a disposition to dabble in poetry, and this likewise was caught by his pupil. Before he was eight years old, Goldsmith had

contracted a habit of scribbling verses on small scraps of paper, which, in a little while, he would throw into the fire. A few of these sibylline leaves, however, were rescued from the flames and conveyed to his mother. The good woman read them with a mother's delight, and saw at once that her son was a genius and a poet. From that time she beset her husband with solicitations to give the boy an education suitable to his talents. The worthy man was already straitened by the costs of instruction of his eldest son Henry, and had intended to bring his second son up to a trade; but the mother would listen to no such thing; as usual, her influence prevailed, and Oliver, instead of being instructed in some humble, but cheerful and gainful handicraft, was devoted to poverty and the Muse.

A severe attack of the small-pox caused him to be taken from under the care of his story-telling preceptor, Byrne. His malady had nearly proved fatal, and his face remained pitted through life. On his recovery he was placed under the charge of the Rev. Mr. Griffin, schoolmaster of Elphin, in Roscommon, and became an inmate in the house of his uncle, John Goldsmith, Esq., of Ballyoughter, in that vicinity. He now entered upon studies of a higher order, but without making any uncommon progress. Still a careless, easy facility of disposition, an amusing eccentricity of manners, and a vein of quiet and peculiar humor, rendered him a general favorite, and a trifling incident soon induced his uncle's family to concur in his mother's opinion of his genius.

A number of young folks had assembled at his uncle's to dance. One of the company, named Cummings, played on the violin. In the course of the evening Oliver undertook a hornpipe. His short and clumsy figure, and his face pitted and discolored with the small-pox, rendered him a ludicrous figure in the eyes of the musician, who made

merry at his expense, dubbing him his little Æsop. Goldsmith was nettled by the jest, and, stopping short in the hornpipe, exclaimed, —

> "Our herald hath proclaimed this saying,
> See Æsop dancing, and his monkey playing."

The repartee was thought wonderful for a boy of nine years old, and Oliver became forthwith the wit and the bright genius of the family. It was thought a pity he should not receive the same advantages with his elder brother Henry, who had been sent to the University; and, as his father's circumstances would not afford it, several of his relatives, spurred on by the representations of his mother, agreed to contribute towards the expense. The greater part, however, was borne by his uncle, the Rev. Thomas Contarine. This worthy man had been the college companion of Bishop Berkeley, and was possessed of moderate means, holding the living of Carrick-on-Shannon. He had married the sister of Goldsmith's father, but was now a widower, with an only child, a daughter, named Jane. Contarine was a kind-hearted man, with a generosity beyond his means. He took Goldsmith into favor from his infancy; his house was open to him during the holidays; his daughter Jane, two years older than the poet, was his early playmate; and uncle Contarine continued to the last one of his most active, unwavering, and generous friends.

Fitted out in a great measure by this considerate relative, Oliver was now transferred to schools of a higher order, to prepare him for the University; first to one at Athlone, kept by the Rev. Mr. Campbell, and, at the end of two years, to one at Edgeworthstown, under the superintendence of the Rev. Patrick Hughes.

Even at these schools his proficiency does appear not to have been brilliant. He was indolent and careless, however,

rather than dull, and, on the whole, appears to have been well thought of by his teachers. In his studies he inclined towards the Latin poets and historians; relished Ovid and Horace, and delighted in Livy. He exercised himself with pleasure in reading and translating Tacitus, and was brought to pay attention to style in his compositions by a reproof from his brother Henry, to whom he had written brief and confused letters, and who told him in reply, that, if he had but little to say, to endeavor to say that little well.

The career of his brother Henry at the University was enough to stimulate him to exertion. He seemed to be realizing all his father's hopes, and was winning collegiate honors that the good man considered indicative of his future success in life.

In the meanwhile, Oliver, if not distinguished among his teachers, was popular among his schoolmates. He had a thoughtless generosity extremely captivating to young hearts: his temper was quick and sensitive, and easily offended; but his anger was momentary, and it was impossible for him to harbor resentment. He was the leader of all boyish sports and athletic amusements, especially ball-playing, and he was foremost in all mischievous pranks. Many years afterward, an old man, Jack Fitzimmons, one of the directors of the sports, and keeper of the ball-court at Ballymahon, used to boast of having been schoolmate of "Noll Goldsmith," as he called him, and would dwell with vainglory on one of their exploits, in robbing the orchard of Tirlicken, an old family residence of Lord Annaly. The exploit, however, had nearly involved disastrous consequences; for the crew of juvenile depredators were captured, like Shakspeare and his deer-stealing colleagues; and nothing but the respectability of Goldsmith's connections saved him from the punishment that would have awaited more plebeian delinquents.

An amusing incident is related as occurring in Goldsmith's last journey homeward from Edgeworthstown. His father's house was about twenty miles distant; the road lay through a rough country, impassable for carriages. Goldsmith procured a horse for the journey, and a friend furnished him with a guinea for travelling expenses. He was but a stripling of sixteen, and being thus suddenly mounted on horseback, with money in his pocket, it is no wonder that his head was turned. He determined to play the man, and to spend his money in independent traveller's style. Accordingly, instead of pushing directly for home, he halted for the night at the little town of Ardagh, and, accosting the first person he met, inquired, with somewhat of a consequential air, for the best house in the place. Unluckily, the person he had accosted was one Kelly, a notorious wag, who was quartered in the family of one Mr. Featherstone, a gentleman of fortune. Amused with the self-consequence of the stripling, and willing to play off a practical joke at his expense, he directed him to what was literally "the best house in the place," namely, the family mansion of Mr. Featherstone. Goldsmith accordingly rode up to what he supposed to be an inn, ordered his horse to be taken to the stable, walked into the parlor, seated himself by the fire, and demanded what he could have for supper. On ordinary occasions he was diffident and even awkward in his manners, but here he was "at ease in his inn," and felt called upon to show his manhood and enact the experienced traveller. His person was by no means calculated to play off his pretensions, for he was short and thick, with a pock-marked face, and an air and carriage by no means of a distinguished cast. The owner of the house, however, soon discovered his whimsical mistake, and, being a man of humor, determined to indulge it, especially as he accidentally learned that this intruding guest was the son of an old acquaintance.

Accordingly, Goldsmith was "fooled to the top of his bent," and permitted to have full sway throughout the evening. Never was schoolboy more elated. When supper was served, he most condescendingly insisted that the landlord, his wife and daughter should partake, and ordered a bottle of wine to crown the repast and benefit the house. His last flourish was on going to bed, when he gave especial orders to have a hot cake at breakfast. His confusion and dismay, on discovering the next morning that he had been swaggering in this free and easy way in the house of a private gentleman, may be readily conceived. True to his habit of turning the events of his life to literary account, we find this chapter of ludicrous blunders and cross-purposes dramatized many years afterward in his admirable comedy of "She Stoops to Conquer, or the Mistakes of a Night."

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. How does the opening paragraph differ from the kind of opening usually adopted in school papers for a short biographical sketch?

2. Goldsmith's schooling.

3. Mention four eighteenth-century writers of loftier pretensions than Oliver Goldsmith.

4. What writings of Goldsmith are most frequently quoted?

5. How far may the inmost details of a distinguished literary man's life be revealed with propriety?

6. From the details given in Chapter I, show how Byrne was a good tutor for a boy inclined to poetry.

7. Explain why Goldsmith was popular among his schoolmates. Do the same characteristics which made him popular usually make a student popular now?

CHAPTER II

Improvident Marriages in the Goldsmith Family — Goldsmith at the University — Situation of a Sizer — Tyranny of Wilder, the Tutor — Pecuniary Straits — Street-Ballads — College Riot — Gallows Walsh — College Prize — A Dance interrupted.

While Oliver was making his way somewhat negligently through the schools, his elder brother Henry was rejoicing his father's heart by his career at the University. He soon distinguished himself at the examinations, and obtained a scholarship in 1743. This is a collegiate distinction which serves as a stepping-stone in any of the learned professions, and which leads to advancement in the University should the individual choose to remain there. His father now trusted that he would push forward for that comfortable provision, a fellowship, and thence to higher dignities and emoluments. Henry, however, had the improvidence or the "unworldliness" of his race: returning to the country during the succeeding vacation, he married for love, relinquished, of course, all his collegiate prospects and advantages, set up a school in his father's neighborhood, and buried his talents and acquirements for the remainder of his life in a curacy of forty pounds a year.

Another matrimonial event occurred not long afterward in the Goldsmith family, to disturb the equanimity of its worthy head. This was the clandestine marriage of his daughter Catherine with a young gentleman of the name of Hodson, who had been confided to the care of her brother Henry to complete his studies. As the youth was of wealthy parentage, it was thought a lucky match for the Goldsmith family; but the tidings of the event stung the

bride's father to the soul. Proud of his integrity, and jealous of that good name which was his chief possession, he saw himself and his family subjected to the degrading suspicion of having abused a trust reposed in them to promote a mercenary match. In the first transports of his feelings, he is said to have uttered a wish that his daughter might never have a child to bring like shame and sorrow on her head. The hasty wish, so contrary to the usual benignity of the man, was recalled and repented of almost as soon as uttered; but it was considered baleful in its effects by the superstitious neighborhood; for, though his daughter bore three children, they all died before her.

A more effectual measure was taken by Mr. Goldsmith to ward off the apprehended imputation, but one which imposed a heavy burden on his family. This was to furnish a marriage portion of four hundred pounds, that his daughter might not be said to have entered her husband's family empty-handed. To raise the sum in cash was impossible; but he assigned to Mr. Hodson his little farm and the income of his tithes until the marriage portion should be paid. In the mean time, as his living did not amount to £200 per annum, he had to practise the strictest economy to pay off gradually this heavy tax incurred by his nice sense of honor.

The first of his family to feel the effects of this economy was Oliver. The time had now arrived for him to be sent to the University; and, accordingly, on the 11th June, 1745, when seventeen years of age, he entered Trinity College, Dublin; but his father was no longer able to place him there as a pensioner, as he had done his eldest son Henry; he was obliged, therefore, to enter him as a sizer, or "poor scholar." He was lodged in one of the top rooms adjoining the library of the building, numbered 35, where it is said his name may still be seen, scratched by himself upon a window-frame.

A student of this class is taught and boarded gratuitously, and has to pay but a small sum for his room. It is expected, in return for these advantages, that he will be a diligent student, and render himself useful in a variety of ways. In Trinity College, at the time of Goldsmith's admission, several derogatory, and, indeed, menial offices were exacted from the sizer, as if the college sought to indemnify itself for conferring benefits by inflicting indignities. He was obliged to sweep part of the courts in the morning; to carry up the dishes from the kitchen to the fellows' table, and to wait in the hall until that body had dined. His very dress marked the inferiority of the "poor student" to his happier classmates. It was a black gown of coarse stuff without sleeves, and a plain black cloth cap without a tassel. We can conceive nothing more odious and ill-judged than these distinctions, which attached the idea of degradation to poverty, and placed the indigent youth of merit below the worthless minion of fortune. They were calculated to wound and irritate the noble mind, and to render the base mind baser.

Indeed, the galling effect of these servile tasks upon youths of proud spirits and quick sensibilities became at length too notorious to be disregarded. About fifty years since, on a Trinity Sunday, a number of persons were assembled to witness the college ceremonies; and as a sizer was carrying up a dish of meat to the fellows' table, a burly citizen in the crowd made some sneering observation on the servility of his office. Stung to the quick, the high-spirited youth instantly flung the dish and its contents at the head of the sneerer. The sizer was sharply reprimanded for this outbreak of wounded pride, but the degrading task was from that day forward very properly consigned to menial hands.

It was with the utmost repugnance that Goldsmith entered college in this capacity. His shy and sensitive nature was

affected by the inferior station he was doomed to hold among his gay and opulent fellow-students, and he became, at times, moody and despondent. A recollection of these early mortifications induced him, in after-years, most strongly to dissuade his brother Henry, the clergyman, from sending a son to college on a like footing. "If he has ambition, strong passions, and an exquisite sensibility of contempt, do not send him there, unless you have no other trade for him except your own."

To add to his annoyances, the fellow of the college who had the peculiar control of his studies, the Rev. Theaker Wilder, was a man of violent and capricious temper, and of diametrically opposite tastes. The tutor was devoted to the exact sciences; Goldsmith was for the classics. Wilder endeavored to force his favorite studies upon the student by harsh means, suggested by his own coarse and savage nature. He abused him in presence of the class as ignorant and stupid; ridiculed him as awkward and ugly, and at times in the transports of his temper indulged in personal violence. The effect was to aggravate a passive distaste into a positive aversion. Goldsmith was loud in expressing his contempt for mathematics and his dislike of ethics and logic; and the prejudices thus imbibed continued through life. Mathematics he always pronounced a science to which the meanest intellects were competent.

A truer cause of this distaste for the severer studies may probably be found in his natural indolence and his love of convivial pleasures. "I was a lover of mirth, good-humor, and even sometimes of fun," said he, "from my childhood." He sang a good song, was a boon companion, and could not resist any temptation to social enjoyment. He endeavored to persuade himself that learning and dulness went hand in hand, and that genius was not to be put in harness. Even in riper years, when the consciousness of his own deficiencies

ought to have convinced him of the importance of early study, he speaks slightingly of college honors.

"A lad," says he, "whose passions are not strong enough in youth to mislead him from that path of science which his tutors, and not his inclination, have chalked out, by four or five years' perseverance will probably obtain every advantage and honor his college can bestow. I would compare the man whose youth has been thus passed in the tranquillity of dispassionate prudence, to liquors that never ferment, and, consequently, continue always muddy."

The death of his worthy father, which took place early in 1747, rendered Goldsmith's situation at college extremely irksome. His mother was left with little more than the means of providing for the wants of her household, and was unable to furnish him any remittances. He would have been compelled, therefore, to leave college, had it not been for the occasional contributions of friends, the foremost among whom was his generous and warm-hearted uncle Contarine. Still these supplies were so scanty and precarious, that in the intervals between them he was put to great straits. He had two college associates from whom he would occasionally borrow small sums; one was an early schoolmate, by the name of Beatty; the other a cousin, and the chosen companion of his frolics, Robert (or rather Rob) Bryanton, of Ballymulvey House, near Ballymahon. When these casual supplies failed him, he was more than once obliged to raise funds for his immediate wants by pawning his books. At times he sank into despondency, but he had what he termed "a knack at hoping," which soon buoyed him up again. He began now to resort to his poetical vein as a source of profit, scribbling street-ballads, which he privately sold for five shillings each at a shop which dealt in such small wares of literature. He felt an author's affection for these unowned bantlings, and we are told would stroll

privately through the streets at night to hear them sung, listening to the comments and criticisms of by-standers, and observing the degree of applause which each received.

Edmund Burke was a fellow-student with Goldsmith at the college. Neither the statesman nor the poet gave promise of their future celebrity, though Burke certainly surpassed his contemporary in industry and application, and evinced more disposition for self-improvement, associating himself with a number of his fellow-students in a debating club, in which they discussed literary topics, and exercised themselves in composition.

Goldsmith may likewise have belonged to this association, but his propensity was rather to mingle with the gay and thoughtless. On one occasion we find him implicated in an affair that came nigh producing his expulsion. A report was brought to college that a scholar was in the hands of the bailiffs. This was an insult in which every gownsman felt himself involved. A number of the scholars flew to arms, and sallied forth to battle, headed by a hair-brained fellow nicknamed Gallows Walsh, noted for his aptness at mischief and fondness for riot. The stronghold of the bailiff was carried by storm, the scholar set at liberty, and the delinquent catchpole borne off captive to the college, where, having no pump to put him under, they satisfied the demands of collegiate law by ducking him in an old cistern.

Flushed with this signal victory, Gallows Walsh now harangued his followers, and proposed to break open Newgate, or the Black Dog, as the prison was called, and effect a general jail-delivery. He was answered by shouts of concurrence, and away went the throng of madcap youngsters, fully bent upon putting an end to the tyranny of law. They were joined by the mob of the city, and made an attack upon the prison with true Irish precipitation and thoughtlessness, never having provided themselves with cannon to batter its

stone walls. A few shots from the prison brought them to their senses, and they beat a hasty retreat, two of the townsmen being killed, and several wounded.

A severe scrutiny of this affair took place at the University. Four students, who had been ringleaders, were expelled; four others, who had been prominent in the affray, were publicly admonished; among the latter was the unlucky Goldsmith.

To make up for this disgrace, he gained, within a month afterward, one of the minor prizes of the college. It is true it was one of the very smallest, amounting in pecuniary value to but thirty shillings, but it was the first distinction he had gained in his whole collegiate career. This turn of success and sudden influx of wealth proved too much for the head of our poor student. He forthwith gave a supper and dance at his chamber to a number of young persons of both sexes from the city, in direct violation of college rules. The unwonted sound of the fiddle reached the ears of the implacable Wilder. He rushed to the scene of unhallowed festivity, inflicted corporal punishment on the "father of the feast," and turned his astonished guests neck and heels out-of-doors.

This filled the measure of poor Goldsmith's humiliations; he felt degraded both within college and without. He dreaded the ridicule of his fellow-students for the ludicrous termination of his orgie, and he was ashamed to meet his city acquaintances after the degrading chastisement received in their presence, and after their own ignominious expulsion. Above all, he felt it impossible to submit any longer to the insulting tyranny of Wilder: he determined, therefore, to leave, not merely the college, but also his native land, and to bury what he conceived to be his irretrievable disgrace in some distant country. He accordingly sold his books and clothes, and sallied forth from the college walls the very next day, intending to embark at Cork for — he scarce knew

where — America, or any other part beyond sea. With his usual heedless imprudence, however, he loitered about Dublin until his finances were reduced to a shilling; with this amount of specie he set out on his journey.

For three whole days he subsisted on his shilling; when that was spent, he parted with some of the clothes from his back, until, reduced almost to nakedness, he was four-and-twenty hours without food, insomuch that he declared a handful of gray peas, given to him by a girl at a wake, was one of the most delicious repasts he had ever tasted. Hunger, fatigue, and destitution brought down his spirit and calmed his anger. Fain would he have retraced his steps, could he have done so with any salvo for the lingerings of his pride. In his extremity he conveyed to his brother Henry information of his distress, and of the rash project on which he had set out. His affectionate brother hastened to his relief; furnished him with money and clothes; soothed his feelings with gentle counsel; prevailed upon him to return to college, and effected an indifferent reconciliation between him and Wilder.

After this irregular sally upon life he remained nearly two years longer at the University, giving proofs of talent in occasional translations from the classics, for one of which he received a premium, awarded only to those who are the first in literary merit. Still he never made much figure at college, his natural disinclination to study being increased by the harsh treatment he continued to experience from his tutor.

Among the anecdotes told of him while at college is one indicative of that prompt but thoughtless and often whimsical benevolence which throughout life formed one of the most eccentric, yet endearing points of his character. He was engaged to breakfast one day with a college intimate, but failed to make his appearance. His friend repaired to his

room, knocked at the door, and was bidden to enter. To his surprise, he found Goldsmith in his bed, immersed to his chin in feathers. A serio-comic story explained the circumstance. In the course of the preceding evening's stroll he had met with a woman with five children, who implored his charity. Her husband was in the hospital; she was just from the country, a stranger, and destitute, without food or shelter for her helpless offspring. This was too much for the kind heart of Goldsmith. He was almost as poor as herself, it is true, and had no money in his pocket; but he brought her to the college-gate, gave her the blankets from his bed to cover her little brood, and part of his clothes for her to sell and purchase food; and, finding himself cold during the night, had cut open his bed and buried himself among the feathers.

At length, on the 27th of February, 1749, O. S., he was admitted to the degree of Bachelor of Arts, and took his final leave of the University. He was freed from college rule, that emancipation so ardently coveted by the thoughtless student, and which too generally launches him amid the cares, the hardships, and vicissitudes of life. He was freed, too, from the brutal tyranny of Wilder. If his kind and placable nature could retain any resentment for past injuries, it might have been gratified by learning subsequently that the passionate career of Wilder was terminated by a violent death in the course of a dissolute brawl; but Goldsmith took no delight in the misfortunes even of his enemies.

He now returned to his friends, no longer the student to sport away the happy interval of vacation, but the anxious man, who is henceforth to shift for himself and make his way through the world. In fact, he had no legitimate home to return to. At the death of his father, the paternal house at Lissoy, in which Goldsmith had passed his childhood,

had been taken by Mr. Hodson, who had married his sister Catherine. His mother had removed to Ballymahon, where she occupied a small house, and had to practise the severest frugality. His elder brother Henry served the curacy and taught the school of his late father's parish, and lived in narrow circumstances at Goldsmith's birthplace, the old goblin-house at Pallas.

None of his relatives were in circumstances to aid him with anything more than a temporary home, and the aspect of every one seemed somewhat changed. In fact, his career at college had disappointed his friends, and they began to doubt his being the great genius they had fancied him. He whimsically alludes to this circumstance in that piece of autobiography, "The Man in Black," in the "Citizen of the World."

"The first opportunity my father had of finding his expectations disappointed was in the middling figure I made at the University: he had flattered himself that he should soon see me rising into the foremost rank in literary reputation, but was mortified to find me utterly unnoticed and unknown. His disappointment might have been partly ascribed to his having overrated my talents, and partly to my dislike of mathematical reasonings at a time when my imagination and memory, yet unsatisfied, were more eager after new objects than desirous of reasoning upon those I knew. This, however, did not please my tutors, who observed, indeed, that I was a little dull, but at the same time allowed that I seemed to be very good-natured, and had no harm in me."[1]

The only one of his relatives who did not appear to lose faith in him was his uncle Contarine. This kind and considerate man, it is said, saw in him a warmth of heart requiring some skill to direct, and a latent genius that

[1] Citizen of the World, letter xxvii.

wanted time to mature; and these impressions none of his subsequent follies and irregularities wholly obliterated. His purse and affection, therefore, as well as his house, were now open to him, and he became his chief counsellor and director after his father's death. He urged him to prepare for holy orders; and others of his relatives concurred in the advice. Goldsmith had a settled repugnance to a clerical life. This has been ascribed by some to conscientious scruples, not considering himself of a temper and frame of mind for such a sacred office; others attributed it to his roving propensities, and his desire to visit foreign countries; he himself gives a whimsical objection in his biography of the "Man in Black": — "To be obliged to wear a long wig when I liked a short one, or a black coat when I generally dressed in brown, I thought such a restraint upon my liberty that I absolutely rejected the proposal."

In effect, however, his scruples were overruled, and he agreed to qualify himself for the office. He was now only twenty-one, and must pass two years of probation. They were two years of rather loitering, unsettled life. Sometimes he was at Lissoy, participating with thoughtless enjoyment in the rural sports and occupations of his brother-in-law, Mr. Hodson; sometimes he was with his brother Henry, at the old goblin mansion at Pallas, assisting him occasionally in his school. The early marriage and unambitious retirement of Henry, though so subversive of the fond plans of his father, had proved happy in their results. He was already surrounded by a blooming family; he was contented with his lot, beloved by his parishioners, and lived in the daily practice of all the amiable virtues, and the immediate enjoyment of their reward. Of the tender affection inspired in the breast of Goldsmith by the constant kindness of this excellent brother, and of the longing

recollection with which, in the lonely wanderings of after-years, he looked back upon this scene of domestic felicity, we have a touching instance in the well-known opening to his poem of "The Traveller": —

"Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow,
Or by the lazy Scheld or wandering Po;

. . . . . .

Where'er I roam, whatever realms to see,
My heart untravell'd fondly turns to thee;
Still to my brother turns with ceaseless pain,
And drags at each remove a lengthening chain.

"Eternal blessings crown my earliest friend,
And round his dwelling guardian saints attend;
Bless'd be that spot, where cheerful guests retire
To pause from toil, and trim their evening fire;
Bless'd that abode, where want and pain repair,
And every stranger finds a ready chair:
Bless'd be those feasts with simple plenty crown'd
Where all the ruddy family around
Laugh at the jests or pranks that never fail,
Or sigh with pity at some mournful tale;
Or press the bashful stranger to his food,
And learn the luxury of doing good."

During this loitering life Goldsmith pursued no study, but rather amused himself with miscellaneous reading; such as biography, travels, poetry, novels, plays — everything, in short, that administered to the imagination. Sometimes he strolled along the banks of the river Inny; where, in after-years, when he had become famous, his favorite seats and haunts used to be pointed out. Often he joined in the rustic sports of the villagers, and became adroit at throwing the sledge, a favorite feat of activity and strength in Ireland. Recollections of these "healthful sports" we find in his "Deserted Village": —

"How often have I bless'd the coming day,
When toil remitting lent its turn to play,
And all the village train, from labor free,
Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree:
And many a gambol frolicked o'er the ground,
And sleights of art and feats of strength went round."

A boon companion in all his rural amusements was his cousin and college crony, Robert Bryanton, with whom he sojourned occasionally at Ballymulvey House in the neighborhood. They used to make excursions about the country on foot, sometimes fishing, sometimes hunting otter in the Inny. They got up a country club at the little inn of Ballymahon, of which Goldsmith soon became the oracle and prime wit; astonishing his unlettered associates by his learning, and being considered capital at a song and a story. From the rustic conviviality of the inn at Ballymahon, and the company which used to assemble there, it is surmised that he took some hints in after-life for his picturing of Tony Lumpkin and his associates: "Dick Muggins, the exciseman; Jack Slang, the horse-doctor; little Aminidab, that grinds the music-box, and Tom Twist, that spins the pewter platter." Nay, it is thought that Tony's drinking-song at the "Three Jolly Pigeons" was but a revival of one of the convivial catches at Ballymahon: —

"Then come put the jorum about,
And let us be merry and clever,
Our hearts and our liquors are stout,
Here 's the Three Jolly Pigeons forever.
Let some cry of woodcock or hare,
Your bustards, your ducks, and your widgeons,
But of all the gay birds in the air,
Here 's a health to the Three Jolly Pigeons.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll."

Notwithstanding all these accomplishments and this rural popularity, his friends began to shake their heads and shrug

their shoulders when they spoke of him; and his brother Henry noted with anything but satisfaction his frequent visits to the club at Ballymahon. He emerged, however, unscathed from this dangerous ordeal, more fortunate in this respect than his comrade Bryanton; but he retained throughout life a fondness for clubs: often, too, in the course of his checkered career, he looked back to this period of rural sports and careless enjoyments as one of the few sunny spots of his cloudy life; and though he ultimately rose to associate with birds of a finer feather, his heart would still yearn in secret after the "THREE JOLLY PIGEONS."

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. To what extent was Goldsmith's college life like that of the average collegian of to-day? In what respects was it different?

2. What other distinguished authors of Great Britain at one time or another in their lives planned to sail for America? Would they probably have attained greatness if they had come?

3. Is the age at which Goldsmith took his degree above or below the present average age for graduation from college?

4. The country club.

CHAPTER III

Goldsmith rejected by the Bishop — Second Sally to see the World — Takes Passage for America — Ship sails without him — Return on Fiddle-back — A hospitable Friend — The Counsellor.

The time had now arrived for Goldsmith to apply for orders, and he presented himself accordingly before the Bishop of Elphin for ordination. We have stated his great objection to clerical life, the obligation to wear a black coat; and, whimsical as it may appear, dress seems in fact to have formed an obstacle to his entrance into the Church. He had ever a passion for clothing his sturdy but awkward little person in gay colors; and on this solemn occasion, when it was to be supposed his garb would be of suitable gravity, he appeared luminously arrayed in scarlet breeches! He was rejected by the Bishop: some say for want of sufficient studious preparation; his rambles and frolics with Bob Bryanton, and his revels with the club at Ballymahon, having been much in the way of his theological studies; others attribute his rejection to reports of his college irregularities, which the Bishop had received from his old tyrant Wilder; but those who look into the matter with more knowing eyes, pronounce the scarlet breeches to have been the fundamental objection. "My friends," says Goldsmith, speaking through his humorous representative, the "Man in Black," — "my friends were now perfectly satisfied I was undone; and yet they thought it a pity for one that had not the least harm in him, and was so very good-natured." His uncle Contarine, however, still remained unwavering in his kindness, though much less sanguine in his expectations. He now looked round for a humbler sphere of action, and through his

influence and exertions Oliver was received as tutor in the family of a Mr. Flinn, a gentleman of the neighborhood. The situation was apparently respectable; he had his seat at the table; and joined the family in their domestic recreations and their evening game at cards. There was a servility, however, in his position, which was not to his taste; nor did his deference for the family increase upon familiar intercourse. He charged a member of it with unfair play at cards. A violent altercation ensued, which ended in his throwing up his situation as tutor. On being paid off he found himself in possession of an unheard-of amount of money. His wandering propensity and his desire to see the world were instantly in the ascendency. Without communicating his plans or intentions to his friends, he procured a good horse, and, with thirty pounds in his pocket, made his second sally forth into the world.

The worthy niece and housekeeper of the hero of La Mancha could not have been more surprised and dismayed at one of the Don's clandestine expeditions than were the mother and friends of Goldsmith when they heard of his mysterious departure. Weeks elapsed, and nothing was seen or heard of him. It was feared that he had left the country on one of his wandering freaks, and his poor mother was reduced almost to despair when one day he arrived at her door almost as forlorn in plight as the prodigal son. Of his thirty pounds not a shilling was left; and, instead of the goodly steed on which he had issued forth on his errantry, he was mounted on a sorry little pony, which he had nicknamed Fiddle-back. As soon as his mother was well assured of his safety, she rated him soundly for his inconsiderate conduct. His brothers and sisters, who were tenderly attached to him, interfered, and succeeded in mollifying her ire; and whatever lurking anger the good dame might have, was no doubt effectually vanquished by the

following whimsical narrative which he drew up at his brother's house and dispatched to her:—

"My dear mother, if you will sit down and calmly listen to what I say, you shall be fully resolved in every one of those many questions you have asked me. I went to Cork and converted my horse, which you prize so much higher than Fiddle-back, into cash, took my passage in a ship bound for America, and, at the same time, paid the captain for my freight and all the other expenses of my voyage. But it so happened that the wind did not answer for three weeks, and you know, mother, that I could not command the elements. My misfortune was, that, when the wind served, I happened to be with a party in the country, and my friend the captain never inquired after me, but set sail with as much indifference as if I had been on board. The remainder of my time I employed in the city and its environs, viewing everything curious, and you know no one can starve while he has money in his pocket.

"Reduced, however, to my last two guineas, I began to think of my dear mother and friends whom I had left behind me, and so bought that generous beast, Fiddle-back, and bade adieu to Cork with only five shillings in my pocket. This, to be sure, was but a scanty allowance for man and horse towards a journey of above a hundred miles; but I did not despair, for I knew I must find friends on the road.

"I recollected particularly an old and faithful acquaintance I made at college, who had often and earnestly pressed me to spend a summer with him, and he lived but eight miles from Cork. This circumstance of vicinity he would expatiate on to me with peculiar emphasis. 'We shall,' says he, 'enjoy the delights of both city and country, and you shall command my stable and my purse.'

"However, upon the way I met a poor woman all in tears, who told me her husband had been arrested for a debt he

was not able to pay, and that his eight children must now starve, bereaved as they were of his industry, which had been their only support. I thought myself at home, being not far from my good friend's house, and therefore parted with a moiety of all my store; and pray, mother, ought I not have given her the other half-crown, for what she got would be of little use to her? However, I soon arrived at the mansion of my affectionate friend, guarded by the vigilance of a huge mastiff, who flew at me and would have torn me to pieces but for the assistance of a woman, whose countenance was not less grim than that of the dog; yet she with great humanity relieved me from the jaws of this Cerberus, and was prevailed on to carry up my name to her master.

"Without suffering me to wait long, my old friend, who was then recovering from a severe fit of sickness, came down in his nightcap, nightgown, and slippers, and embraced me with the most cordial welcome, showed me in, and, after giving me a history of his indisposition, assured me that he considered himself peculiarly fortunate in having under his roof the man he most loved on earth, and whose stay with him must, above all things, contribute to perfect his recovery. I now repented sorely I had not given the poor woman the other half-crown, as I thought all my bills of humanity would be punctually answered by this worthy man. I revealed to him my whole soul; I opened to him all my distresses; and freely owned that I had but one half-crown in my pocket; but that now, like a ship after weathering out the storm, I considered myself secure in a safe and hospitable harbor. He made no answer, but walked about the room, rubbing his hands as one in deep study. This I imputed to the sympathetic feelings of a tender heart, which increased my esteem for him, and, as that increased, I gave the most favorable interpretation to his silence. I construed it into delicacy of sentiment, as if he

dreaded to wound my pride by expressing his commiseration in words, leaving his generous conduct to speak for itself.

"It now approached six o'clock in the evening; and as I had eaten no breakfast, and as my spirits were raised, my appetite for dinner grew uncommonly keen. At length the old woman came into the room with two plates, one spoon, and a dirty cloth, which she laid upon the table. This appearance, without increasing my spirits, did not diminish my appetite. My protectress soon returned with a small bowl of sago, a small porringer of sour milk, a loaf of stale brown bread, and the heel of an old cheese all over crawling with mites. My friend apologized that his illness obliged him to live on slops, and that better fare was not in the house; observing, at the same time, that a milk diet was certainly the most healthful; and at eight o'clock he again recommended a regular life, declaring that for his part he would *lie down with the lamb and rise with the lark.* My hunger was at this time so exceedingly sharp that I wished for another slice of the loaf, but was obliged to go to bed without even that refreshment.

"'This lenten entertainment I had received made me resolve to depart as soon as possible; accordingly, next morning, when I spoke of going, he did not oppose my resolution; he rather commended my design, adding some very sage counsel upon the occasion. 'To be sure,' said he, 'the longer you stay away from your mother, the more you will grieve her and your other friends; and possibly they are already afflicted at hearing of this foolish expedition you have made.' Notwithstanding all this, and without any hope of softening such a sordid heart, I again renewed the tale of my distress, and asking 'how he thought I could travel above a hundred miles upon one half-crown?' I begged to borrow a single guinea, which I assured him should be repaid with thanks. 'And you know, sir,' said

I, 'it is no more than I have done for you.' To which he firmly answered, 'Why, look you, Mr. Goldsmith, that is neither here nor there. I have paid you all you ever lent me, and this sickness of mine has left me bare of cash. But I have bethought myself of a conveyance for you; sell your horse, and I will furnish you a much better one to ride on.' I readily grasped at his proposal, and begged to see the nag; on which he led me to his bedchamber, and from under the bed he pulled out a stout oak stick. 'Here he is,' said he; 'take this in your hand, and it will carry you to your mother's with more safety than such a horse as you ride.' I was in doubt, when I got it into my hand, whether I should not, in the first place, apply it to his pate; but a rap at the street-door made the wretch fly to it, and when I returned to the parlor he introduced me, as if nothing of the kind had happened, to the gentleman who entered, as Mr. Goldsmith, his most ingenious and worthy friend, of whom he had so often heard him speak with rapture. I could scarcely compose myself; and must have betrayed indignation in my mien to the stranger, who was a counsellor-at-law in the neighborhood, a man of engaging aspect and polite address.

"After spending an hour, he asked my friend and me to dine with him at his house. This I declined at first, as I wished to have no farther communication with my hospitable friend; but at the solicitation of both I at last consented, determined as I was by two motives: one, that I was prejudiced in favor of the looks and manner of the counsellor; and the other, that I stood in need of a comfortable dinner. And there, indeed, I found everything that I could wish, abundance without profusion, and elegance without affectation. In the evening, when my old friend, who had eaten very plentifully at his neighbor's table, but talked again of lying down with the lamb, made a motion to me for retiring, our generous host requested I should

take a bed with him, upon which I plainly told my old friend that he might go home and take care of the horse he had given me, but that I should never reënter his doors. He went away with a laugh, leaving me to add this to the other little things the counsellor already knew of his plausible neighbor.

"And now, my dear mother, I found sufficient to reconcile me to all my follies; for here I spent three whole days. The counsellor had two sweet girls to his daughters, who played enchantingly on the harpsichord; and yet it was but a melancholy pleasure I felt the first time I heard them; for that being the first time also that either of them had touched the instrument since their mother's death, I saw the tears in silence trickle down their father's cheeks. I every day endeavored to go away, but every day was pressed and obliged to stay. On my going, the counsellor offered me his purse, with a horse and servant to convey me home; but the latter I declined, and only took a guinea to bear my necessary expenses on the road. OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"To Mrs. Anne Goldsmith, Ballymahon."

Such is the story given by the poet-errant of this his second sally in quest of adventures. We cannot but think it was here and there touched up a little with the fanciful pen of the future essayist, with a view to amuse his mother and soften her vexation; but even in these respects it is valuable as showing the early play of his humor, and his happy knack of extracting sweets from that worldly experience which to others yields nothing but bitterness.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Contrast the dispositions of Goldsmith and his college friend.
2. How many dates has Irving thus far inserted in the biography?
3. Is there any incident in "The Vicar of Wakefield" corresponding at all with Goldsmith's disposing of his horse?

CHAPTER IV

Sallies forth as a Law Student — Stumbles at the Outset — Cousin Jane and the Valentine — A Family Oracle — Sallies forth as a Student of Medicine — Hocus-pocus of a Boarding-House — Transformations of a Leg of Mutton — The mock Ghost — Sketches of Scotland — Trials of Toadyism — A Poet's Purse for a Continental Tour.

A new consultation was held among Goldsmith's friends as to his future course, and it was determined he should try the law. His uncle Contarine agreed to advance the necessary funds, and actually furnished him with fifty pounds, with which he set off for London, to enter on his studies at the Temple. Unfortunately, he fell in company at Dublin with a Roscommon acquaintance, one whose wits had been sharpened about town, who beguiled him into a gambling-house, and soon left him as penniless as when he bestrode the redoubtable Fiddle-back.

He was so ashamed of this fresh instance of gross heedlessness and imprudence, that he remained some time in Dublin without communicating to his friends his destitute condition. They heard of it, however, and he was invited back to the country, and indulgently forgiven by his generous uncle, but less readily by his mother, who was mortified and disheartened at seeing all her early hopes of him so repeatedly blighted. His brother Henry, too, began to lose patience at these successive failures, resulting from thoughtless indiscretion; and a quarrel took place, which for some time interrupted their usually affectionate intercourse.

The only home where poor erring Goldsmith still received a welcome, was the parsonage of his affectionate forgiving uncle. Here he used to talk of literature with the good simple-hearted man, and delight him and his daughter with

his verses. Jane, his early playmate, was now the woman grown; their intercourse was of a more intellectual kind than formerly; they discoursed of poetry and music; she played on the harpsichord, and he accompanied her with his flute. The music may not have been very artistic, as he never performed but by ear; it had probably as much merit as the poetry, which, if we may judge by the following specimen, was as yet but juvenile: —

TO A YOUNG LADY ON VALENTINE'S DAY

WITH THE DRAWING OF A HEART

With submission at your shrine,
Comes a heart your Valentine;
From the side where once it grew,
See it panting flies to you.
Take it, fair one, to your breast,
Soothe the fluttering thing to rest;
Let the gentle, spotless toy
Be your sweetest, greatest joy;
Every night when wrapp'd in sleep,
Next your heart the conquest keep;
Or if dreams your fancy move,
Hear it whisper me and love;
Then in pity to the swain,
Who must heartless else remain,
Soft as gentle dewy show'rs,
Slow descend on April flow'rs;
Soft as gentle riv'lets glide,
Steal unnoticed to my side;
If the gem you have to spare,
Take your own and place it there.

If this Valentine was intended for the fair Jane, and expressive of a tender sentiment indulged by the stripling poet, it was unavailing; as not long afterwards she was married to a Mr. Lawder. We trust, however, it was but a poetical passion of that transient kind which grows up in

idleness and exhales itself in rhyme. While Oliver was thus piping and poetizing at the parsonage, his uncle Contarine received a visit from Dean Goldsmith of Cloyne, — a kind of magnate in the wide but improvident family connection, throughout which his word was law and almost gospel. This august dignitary was pleased to discover signs of talent in Oliver, and suggested that, as he had attempted divinity and law without success, he should now try physic. The advice came from too important a source to be disregarded, and it was determined to send him to Edinburgh to commence his studies. The Dean having given the advice, added to it, we trust, his blessing, but no money; that was furnished from the scantier purses of Goldsmith's brother, his sister (Mrs. Hodson), and his ever-ready uncle, Contarine.

It was in the autumn of 1752 that Goldsmith arrived in Edinburgh. His outset in that city came near adding to the list of his indiscretions and disasters. Having taken lodgings at haphazard, he left his trunk there, containing all his worldly effects, and sallied forth to see the town. After sauntering about the streets until a late hour, he thought of returning home, when, to his confusion, he found he had not acquainted himself with the name either of his landlady or of the street in which she lived. Fortunately, in the height of his whimsical perplexity, he met the cawdy or porter who had carried his trunk, and who now served him as a guide.

He did not remain long in the lodgings in which he had put up. The hostess was too adroit at that hocus-pocus of the table which often is practised in cheap boarding-houses. No one could conjure a single joint through a greater variety of forms. A loin of mutton, according to Goldsmith's account, would serve him and two fellow-students a whole week. "A brandered chop was served up one day, a fried steak another,

collops with onion-sauce a third, and so on until the fleshy parts were quite consumed, when finally a dish of broth was manufactured from the bones on the seventh day, and the landlady rested from her labors." Goldsmith had a good-humored mode of taking things, and for a short time amused himself with the shifts and expedients of his landlady, which struck him in a ludicrous manner; he soon, however, fell in with fellow-students from his own country, whom he joined at more eligible quarters.

He now attended medical lectures, and attached himself to an association of students called the Medical Society. He set out, as usual, with the best intentions, but, as usual, soon fell into idle, convivial, thoughtless habits. Edinburgh was indeed a place of sore trial for one of his temperament. Convivial meetings were all the vogue, and the tavern was the universal rallying-place of good-fellowship. And then Goldsmith's intimacies lay chiefly among the Irish students, who were always ready for a wild freak and frolic. Among them he was a prime favorite and somewhat of a leader, from his exuberance of spirits, his vein of humor, and his talent at singing an Irish song and telling an Irish story.

His usual carelessness in money-matters attended him. Though his supplies from home were scanty and irregular, he never could bring himself into habits of prudence and economy; often he was stripped of all his present finances at play; often he lavished them away in fits of unguarded charity or generosity. Sometimes among his boon companions he assumed a ludicrous swagger in money-matters, which no one afterward was more ready than himself to laugh at. At a convivial meeting with a number of his fellow-students he suddenly proposed to draw lots with any one present which of the two should treat the whole party to the play. The moment the proposition had bolted from his lips, his heart was in his throat. "To my great though

secret joy," said he, "they all declined the challenge. Had it been accepted, and had I proved the loser, a part of my wardrobe must have been pledged in order to raise the money."

At another of these meetings there was an earnest dispute on the question of ghosts, some being firm believers in the possibility of departed spirits returning to visit their friends and familiar haunts. One of the disputants set sail the next day for London, but the vessel put back through stress of weather. His return was unknown except to one of the believers in ghosts, who concerted with him a trick to be played off on the opposite party. In the evening, at a meeting of the students, the discussion was renewed; and one of the most strenuous opposers of ghosts was asked whether he considered himself proof against ocular demonstration. He persisted in his scoffing. Some solemn process of conjuration was performed, and the comrade supposed to be on his way to London made his appearance. The effect was fatal. The unbeliever fainted at the sight, and ultimately went mad. We have no account of what share Goldsmith took in this transaction, at which he was present.

The following letter to his friend Bryanton contains some of Goldsmith's impressions concerning Scotland and its inhabitants, and gives indications of that humor which characterized some of his later writings.

"*Robert Bryanton, at Ballymahon, Ireland.*

"EDINBURGH, September 26th, 1753.

"MY DEAR BOB, —

"How many good excuses (and you know I was ever good at an excuse) might I call up to vindicate my past shameful silence. I might tell how I wrote a long letter on my first coming hither, and seem vastly angry at my not receiving an answer; I might allege that business (with

business you know I was always pestered) had never given me time to finger a pen. But I suppress those and twenty more as plausible, and as easily invented, since they might be attended with a slight inconvenience of being known to be lies. Let me then speak truth. An hereditary indolence (I have it from the mother's side) has hitherto prevented my writing to you, and still prevents my writing at least twenty-five letters more, due to my friends in Ireland. No turnspit-dog gets up into his wheel with more reluctance than I sit down to write; yet no dog ever loved the roast meat he turns better than I do him I now address.

"Yet what shall I say now I am entered? Shall I tire you with a description of this unfruitful country; where I must lead you over their hills all brown with heath, or their valleys scarcely able to feed a rabbit? Man alone seems to be the only creature who has arrived to the natural size in this poor soil. Every part of the country presents the same dismal landscape. No grove, nor brook, lend their music to cheer the stranger, or make the inhabitants forget their poverty. Yet with all these disadvantages to call him down to humility, a Scotchman is one of the proudest things alive. The poor have pride ever ready to relieve them. If mankind should happen to despise them, they are masters of their own admiration; and that they can plentifully bestow upon themselves.

"From their pride and poverty, as I take it, results one advantage this country enjoys; namely, the gentlemen here are much better bred than among us. No such character here as our fox-hunters; and they have expressed great surprise when I informed them that some men in Ireland, of one thousand pounds a year, spend their whole lives in running after a hare, and drinking to be drunk. Truly, if such a being, equipped in his hunting-dress, came among a circle of Scotch gentry, they would behold him with the

same astonishment that a countryman does King George on horseback.

"The men here have generally high cheek-bones, and are lean and swarthy, fond of action, dancing in particular. Now that I have mentioned dancing, let me say something of their balls, which are very frequent here. When a stranger enters the dancing-hall, he sees one end of the room taken up by the ladies, who sit dismally in a group by themselves; — in the other end stand their pensive partners that are to be: — but no more intercourse between the sexes than there is between two countries at war. The ladies indeed may ogle, and the gentlemen sigh; but an embargo is laid on any closer commerce. At length, to interrupt hostilities, the lady directress, or intendant, or what you will, pitches upon a lady and gentleman to walk a minuet; which they perform with a formality that approaches to despondence. After five or six couple have thus walked the gauntlet, all stand up to country dances; each gentleman furnished with a partner from the aforesaid lady directress; so they dance much, say nothing, and thus concludes our assembly. I told a Scotch gentleman that such profound silence resembled the ancient procession of the Roman matrons in honor of Ceres; and the Scotch gentleman told me (and, faith I believe he was right) that I was a very great pedant for my pains.

"Now I am come to the ladies; and to show that I love Scotland, and everything that belongs to so charming a country, I insist on it, and will give him leave to break my head that denies it — that the Scotch ladies are ten thousand times finer and handsomer than the Irish. To be sure, now, I see your sisters Betty and Peggy vastly surprised at my partiality, — but tell them flatly, I don't value them — or their fine skins, or eyes, or good sense, or ——, a potato; — for I say, and will maintain it; and as a convincing proof (I am in a great passion) of what I assert, the Scotch ladies

say it themselves. But to be less serious; where will you find a language so prettily become a pretty mouth as the broad Scotch? And the women here speak it in its highest purity; for instance, teach one of your young ladies at home to pronounce the 'Whoar wull I gong?' with a becoming widening of mouth, and I'll lay my life they 'll wound every hearer.

"We have no such character here as a coquette, but alas! how many envious prudes! Some days ago I walked into my Lord Kilcoubry's (don't be surprised, my lord is but a glover),[1] when the Duchess of Hamilton (that fair who sacrificed her beauty to her ambition, and her inward peace to a title and gilt equipage) passed by in her chariot; her battered husband, or more properly the guardian of her charms, sat by her side. Straight envy began, in the shape of no less than three ladies who sat with me, to find faults in her faultless form. — 'For my part,' says the first, 'I think what I always thought, that the Duchess has too much of the red in her complexion.' 'Madam, I am of your opinion,' says the second; 'I think her face has a palish cast too much on the delicate order.' 'And, let me tell you,' added the third lady, whose mouth was puckered up to the size of an issue, 'that the Duchess has fine lips, but she wants a mouth.' — At this every lady drew up her mouth as if going to pronounce the letter P.

"But how ill, my Bob, does it become me to ridicule women with whom I have scarcely any correspondence! There are, 't is certain, handsome women here; and 't is certain they have handsome men to keep them company. An ugly and poor man is society only for himself; and such

[1] William Maclellan, who claimed the title, and whose son succeeded in establishing the claim in 1773. The father is said to have voted at the election of the sixteen Peers for Scotland; and to have sold gloves in the lobby at this and other public assemblages.

society the world lets me enjoy in great abundance. Fortune has given you circumstances, and Nature a person to look charming in the eyes of the fair. Nor do I envy my dear Bob such blessings, while I may sit down and laugh at the world and at myself — the most ridiculous object in it. But you see I am grown downright splenetic, and perhaps the fit may continue till I receive an answer to this. I know you cannot send me much news from Ballymahon, but such as it is, send it all; everything you send will be agreeable to me.

"Has George Conway put up a sign yet; or John Binley left off drinking drams; or Tom Allen got a new wig? But I leave you to your own choice what to write. While I live, know you have a true friend in yours, &c. &c. &c.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"P. S. — Give my sincere respects (not compliments, do you mind) to your agreeable family, and give my service to my mother, if you see her; for, as you express it in Ireland, I have a sneaking kindness for her still. Direct to me, ——, Student in Physic, in Edinburgh."

Nothing worthy of preservation appeared from his pen during his residence in Edinburgh; and indeed his poetical powers, highly as they had been estimated by his friends, had not as yet produced anything of superior merit. He made on one occasion a month's excursion to the Highlands. "I set out the first day on foot," says he, in a letter to his uncle Contarine, "but an ill-natured corn I have on my toe has for the future prevented that cheap mode of travelling; so the second day I hired a horse, about the size of a ram, and he walked away (trot he could not) as pensive as his master."

During his residence in Scotland his convivial talents gained him at one time attentions in a high quarter, which,

however, he had the good sense to appreciate correctly. "I have spent," says he, in one of his letters, "more than a fortnight every second day at the Duke of Hamilton's; but it seems they like me more as a jester than as a companion, so I disdained so servile an employment as unworthy my calling as a physician." Here we again find the origin of another passage in his autobiography, under the character of the "Man in Black," wherein that worthy figures as a flatterer to a great man. "At first," says he, "I was surprised that the situation of a flatterer at a great man's table could be thought disagreeable; there was no great trouble in listening attentively when his lordship spoke, and laughing when he looked round for applause. This, even good manners might have obliged me to perform. I found, however, too soon, his lordship was a greater dunce than myself, and from that moment flattery was at an end. I now rather aimed at setting him right than at receiving his absurdities with submission: to flatter those we do not know is an easy task; but to flatter our intimate acquaintances, all whose foibles are strongly in our eyes, is drudgery insupportable. Every time I now opened my lips in praise, my falsehood went to my conscience; his lordship soon perceived me to be very unfit for his service: I was therefore discharged; my patron at the same time being graciously pleased to observe that he believed I was tolerably good-natured and had not the least harm in me."

After spending two winters at Edinburgh, Goldsmith prepared to finish his medical studies on the Continent, for which his uncle Contarine agreed to furnish the funds. "I intend," said he, in a letter to his uncle, "to visit Paris, where the great Farheim, Petit, and Du Hamel de Monceau instruct their pupils in all the branches of medicine. They speak French, and consequently I shall have much the advantage of most of my countrymen, as I am perfectly acquainted

with that language, and few who leave Ireland are so. I shall spend the spring and summer in Paris, and the beginning of next winter go to Leyden. The great Albinus is still alive there, and 't will be proper to go, though only to have it said that we have studied in so famous a university.

"As I shall not have another opportunity of receiving money from your bounty till my return to Ireland, so I have drawn for the last sum that I hope I shall ever trouble you for; 't is £20. And now, dear sir, let me here acknowledge the humility of the station in which you found me; let me tell how I was despised by most, and hateful to myself. Poverty, hopeless poverty, was my lot, and Melancholy was beginning to make me her own, when you —— But I stop here, to inquire how your health goes on? How does my cousin Jenny, and has she recovered her late complaint? How does my poor Jack Goldsmith? I fear his disorder is of such a nature as he won't easily recover. I wish, my dear sir, you would make me happy by another letter before I go abroad, for there I shall hardly hear from you. . . . Give my — how shall I express it? — give my earnest love to Mr. and Mrs. Lawder."

Mrs. Lawder was Jane, his early playmate — the object of his valentine — his first poetical inspiration. She had been for some time married.

Medical instruction, it will be perceived, was the ostensible motive for this visit to the Continent, but the real one, in all probability, was his long-cherished desire to see foreign parts. This, however, he would not acknowledge even to himself, but sought to reconcile his roving propensities with some grand moral purpose. "I esteem the traveller who instructs the heart," says he, in one of his subsequent writings, "but I despise him who only indulges the imagination. A man who leaves home to mend himself and others, is a philosopher; but he who goes from country to country.

guided by the blind impulse of curiosity, is only a vagabond." He, of course, was to travel as a philosopher, and in truth his outfits for a Continental tour were in character. "I shall carry just £33 to France," said he, "with good store of clothes, shirts, &c., and that with economy will suffice." He forgot to make mention of his flute, which it will be found had occasionally to come in play when economy could not replenish his purse, nor philosophy find him a supper. Thus slenderly provided with money, prudence or experience, and almost as slightly guarded against "hard knocks" as the hero of La Mancha, whose head-piece was half iron, half pasteboard, he made his final sally forth upon the world; hoping all things; believing all things: little anticipating the checkered ills in store for him; little thinking when he penned his valedictory letter to his good uncle Contarine, that he was never to see him more; never to return after all his wandering to the friend of his infancy; never to revisit his early and fondly remembered haunts at "sweet Lissoy" and Ballymahon.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Goldsmith's residence in Scotland.

2. Early instances of his carelessness in money-matters.

3. Why did he decide to go to the Continent? What itinerary did he plan for himself? Did he carry out his plans? [Glance through subsequent chapters.]

4. Why is it an "insupportable drudgery" to flatter our "intimate acquaintances"? Is flattery ever permissible? What is the sincerest flattery?

CHAPTER V

The agreeable Fellow-Passengers — Risks from Friends picked up by the Wayside — Sketches of Holland and the Dutch — Shifts while a poor Student at Leyden — The Tulip-Speculation — The provident Flute — Sojourn at Paris — Sketch of Voltaire — Travelling Shifts of a Philosophic Vagabond.

His usual indiscretion attended Goldsmith at the very outset of his foreign enterprise. He had intended to take shipping at Leith for Holland; but on arriving at that port, he found a ship about to sail for Bordeaux, with six agreeable passengers, whose acquaintance he had probably made at the inn. He was not a man to resist a sudden impulse; so, instead of embarking for Holland, he found himself ploughing the seas on his way to the other side of the continent. Scarcely had the ship been two days at sea, when she was driven by stress of weather to Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Here "of course" Goldsmith and his agreeable fellow-passengers found it expedient to go on shore and "refresh themselves after the fatigues of the voyage." "Of course" they frolicked and made merry until a late hour in the evening, when, in the midst of their hilarity, the door was burst open, and a sergeant and twelve grenadiers entered with fixed bayonets, and took the whole convivial party prisoners.

It seems that the agreeable companions with whom our greenhorn had struck up such a sudden intimacy, were Scotchmen in the French service, who had been in Scotland enlisting recruits for the French army.

In vain Goldsmith protested his innocence; he was marched off with his fellow-revellers to prison, whence he with difficulty obtained his release at the end of a fortnight. With his customary facility, however, at palliating his

misadventures, he found everything turn out for the best. His imprisonment saved his life, for during his detention the ship proceeded on her voyage, but was wrecked at the mouth of the Garonne, and all on board perished.

Goldsmith's second embarkation was for Holland direct, and in nine days he arrived at Rotterdam, whence he proceeded, without any more deviations, to Leyden. He gives a whimsical picture, in one of his letters, of the appearance of the Hollanders. "The modern Dutchman is quite a different creature from him of former times: he in everything imitates a Frenchman but in his easy, disengaged air. He is vastly ceremonious, and is, perhaps, exactly what a Frenchman might have been in the reign of Louis XIV. Such are the better bred. But the downright Hollander is one of the oddest figures in nature. Upon a lank head of hair he wears a half-cocked narrow hat laced with black ribband; no coat, but seven waistcoats and nine pair of breeches, so that his hips reach up almost to his armpits. This well-clothed vegetable is now fit to see company or make love. But what a pleasing creature is the object of his appetite! why, she wears a large fur cap, with a deal of Flanders lace; and for every pair of breeches he carries, she puts on two petticoats.

"A Dutch lady burns nothing about her phlegmatic admirer but his tobacco. You must know, sir, every woman carries in her hand a stove of coals, which, when she sits, she snugs under her petticoats, and at this chimney, dozing Strephon lights his pipe."

In the same letter he contrasts Scotland and Holland. "There, hills and rocks intercept every prospect; here, it is all a continued plain. There you might see a well-dressed Duchess issuing from a dirty close, and here a dirty Dutchman inhabiting a palace. The Scotch may be compared to a tulip, planted in dung; but I can never see a Dutchman

in his own house, but I think of a magnificent Egyptian temple dedicated to an ox."

The country itself awakened his admiration. "Nothing," said he, "can equal its beauty; wherever I turn my eyes, fine houses, elegant gardens, statues, grottos, vistas, present themselves; but when you enter their towns, you are charmed beyond description. No misery is to be seen here; every one is usefully employed." And again, in his noble description in "The Traveller": —

"To men of other minds my fancy flies,
Imbosom'd in the deep where Holland lies.
Methinks her patient sons before me stand,
Where the broad ocean leans against the land,
And, sedulous to stop the coming tide,
Lift the tall rampire's artificial pride.
Onward, methinks, and diligently slow,
The firm connected bulwark seems to grow;
Spreads its long arms amid the watery roar,
Scoops out an empire, and usurps the shore.
While the pent ocean, rising o'er the pile,
Sees an amphibious world before him smile:
The slow canal, the yellow blossom'd vale,
The willow-tufted bank, the gliding sail,
The crowded mart, the cultivated plain,
A new creation rescued from his reign."

He remained about a year at Leyden, attending the lectures of Gaubius on chemistry and Albinus on anatomy; though his studies are said to have been miscellaneous, and directed to literature rather than science. The thirty-three pounds with which he had set out on his travels were soon consumed, and he was put to many a shift to meet his expenses until his precarious remittances should arrive. He had a good friend on these occasions in a fellow-student and countryman, named Ellis, who afterwards rose to eminence as a physician. He used frequently to loan small sums to

Goldsmith, which were always scrupulously paid. Ellis discovered the innate merits of the poor awkward student, and used to declare in after-life that "it was a common remark in Leyden, that in all the peculiarities of Goldsmith, an elevation of mind was to be noted; a philosophical tone and manner; the feelings of a gentleman, and the language and information of a scholar."

Sometimes, in his emergencies, Goldsmith undertook to teach the English language. It is true he was ignorant of the Dutch, but he had a smattering of the French, picked up among the Irish priests at Ballymahon. He depicts his whimsical embarrassment in this respect, in his account in the "Vicar of Wakefield" of the *philosophical vagabond* who went to Holland to teach the natives English, without knowing a word of their own language. Sometimes, when sorely pinched, and sometimes, perhaps, when flush, he resorted to the gambling-tables, which in those days abounded in Holland. His good friend Ellis repeatedly warned him against this unfortunate propensity, but in vain. It brought its own cure, or rather its own punishment, by stripping him of every shilling.

Ellis once more stepped in to his relief with a true Irishman's generosity, but with more considerateness than generally characterizes an Irishman, for he only granted pecuniary aid on condition of his quitting the sphere of danger. Goldsmith gladly consented to leave Holland, being anxious to visit other parts. He intended to proceed to Paris and pursue his studies there, and was furnished by his friend with money for the journey. Unluckily, he rambled into the garden of a florist just before quitting Leyden. The tulip-mania was still prevalent in Holland, and some species of that splendid flower brought immense prices. In wandering through the garden, Goldsmith recollected that his uncle Contarine was a tulip-fancier. The thought suddenly

struck him that here was an opportunity of testifying, in a delicate manner, his sense of that generous uncle's past kindnesses. In an instant his hand was in his pocket; a number of choice and costly tulip-roots were purchased and packed up for Mr. Contarine; and it was not until he had paid for them that he bethought himself that he had spent all the money borrowed for his travelling expenses. Too proud, however, to give up his journey, and too shamefaced to make another appeal to his friend's liberality, he determined to travel on foot, and depend upon chance and good luck for the means of getting forward; and it is said that he actually set off on a tour of the Continent, in February, 1755, with but one spare shirt, a flute, and a single guinea.

"Blessed," says one of his biographers, "with a good constitution, an adventurous spirit, and with that thoughtless, or, perhaps, happy disposition which takes no care for to-morrow, he continued his travels for a long time in spite of innumerable privations." In his amusing narrative of the adventures of a "Philosophic Vagabond" in the "Vicar of Wakefield," we find shadowed out the expedients he pursued. "I had some knowledge of music, with a tolerable voice; I now turned what was once my amusement into a present means of subsistence. I passed among the harmless peasants of Flanders, and among such of the French as were poor enough to be very merry, for I ever found them sprightly in proportion to their wants. Whenever I approached a peasant's house towards nightfall, I played one of my merriest tunes, and that procured me not only a lodging, but subsistence for the next day; but in truth I must own, whenever I attempted to entertain persons of a higher rank, they always thought my performance odious, and never made me any return for my endeavors to please them."

At Paris he attended the chemical lectures of Rouelle, then in great vogue, where he says he witnessed as bright

a circle of beauty as graced the court of Versailles. His love of theatricals also led him to attend the performances of the celebrated actress Mademoiselle Clairon, with which he was greatly delighted. He seems to have looked upon the state of society with the eye of a philosopher, but to have read the signs of the times with the prophetic eye of a poet. In his rambles about the environs of Paris he was struck with the immense quantities of game running about almost in a tame state; and saw in those costly and rigid preserves for the amusement and luxury of the privileged few, a sure "badge of the slavery of the people." This slavery he predicted was drawing towards a close. "When I consider that these parliaments, the members of which are all created by the court, and the presidents of which can only act by immediate direction, presume even to mention privileges and freedom, who till of late received directions from the throne with implicit humility; when this is considered, I cannot help fancying that the genius of Freedom has entered that kingdom in disguise. If they have but three weak monarchs more successively on the throne, the mask will be laid aside, and the country will certainly once more be free." Events have testified to the sage forecast of the poet.

During a brief sojourn in Paris, he appears to have gained access to valuable society, and to have had the honor and pleasure of making the acquaintance of Voltaire; of whom, in after-years, he wrote a memoir. "As a companion," says he, "no man ever exceeded him when he pleased to lead the conversation; which, however, was not always the case. In company which he either disliked or despised, few could be more reserved than he; but when he was warmed in discourse, and got over a hesitating manner, which sometimes he was subject to, it was rapture to hear him. His meagre visage seemed insensibly to gather beauty: every muscle in

it had meaning, and his eye beamed with unusual brightness. The person who writes this memoir," continues he, "remembers to have seen him in a select company of wits of both sexes at Paris, when the subject happened to turn upon English taste and learning. Fontenelle, (then nearly a hundred years old), who was of the party, and who being unacquainted with the language or authors of the country he undertook to condemn, with a spirit truly vulgar began to revile both. Diderot, who liked the English, and knew something of their literary pretensions, attempted to vindicate their poetry and learning, but with unequal abilities. The company quickly perceived that Fontenelle was superior in the dispute, and were surprised at the silence which Voltaire had preserved all the former part of the night, particularly as the conversation happened to turn upon one of his favorite topics. Fontenelle continued his triumph until about twelve o'clock, when Voltaire appeared at last roused from his reverie. His whole frame seemed animated. He began his defence with the utmost defiance mixed with spirit, and now and then let fall the finest strokes of raillery upon his antagonist; and his harangue lasted till three in the morning. I must confess, that, whether from national partiality, or from the elegant sensibility of his manner, I never was so charmed, nor did I ever remember so absolute a victory as he gained in this dispute." Goldsmith's ramblings took him into Germany and Switzerland, from which last-mentioned country he sent to his brother in Ireland the first brief sketch, afterwards amplified into his poem of "The Traveller."

At Geneva he became travelling tutor to a mongrel young gentleman, son of a London pawnbroker, who had been suddenly elevated into fortune and absurdity by the death of an uncle. The youth, before setting up for a gentleman, had been an attorney's apprentice, and was an arrant pettifogger in money-matters. Never were two beings more illy assorted

than he and Goldsmith. We may form an idea of the tutor and the pupil from the following extract from the narrative of the "Philosophic Vagabond."

"I was to be the young gentleman's governor, but with a proviso that he could always be permitted to govern himself. My pupil, in fact, understood the art of guiding in money-concerns much better than I. He was heir to a fortune of about two hundred thousand pounds, left him by an uncle in the West Indies; and his guardians, to qualify him for the management of it, had bound him apprentice to an attorney. Thus avarice was his prevailing passion; all his questions on the road were, how money might be saved, — which was the least expensive course of travel, — whether anything could be bought that would turn to account when disposed of again in London? Such curiosities on the way as could be seen for nothing he was ready enough to look at; but if the sight of them was to be paid for, he usually asserted that he had been told that they were not worth seeing. He never paid a bill that he would not observe how amazingly expensive travelling was; and all this though not yet twenty-one."

In this sketch Goldsmith undoubtedly shadows forth his annoyances as travelling tutor to this concrete young gentleman, compounded of the pawnbroker, the pettifogger, and the West Indian heir, with an overlaying of the city miser. They had continual difficulties on all points of expense until they reached Marseilles, where both were glad to separate.

Once more on foot, but freed from the irksome duties of "bear-leader," and with some of his pay, as tutor, in his pocket, Goldsmith continued his half vagrant peregrinations through part of France and Piedmont and some of the Italian States. He had acquired, as has been shown, a habit of shifting along and living by expedients, and a new one presented itself in Italy. "My skill in music," says he, in the "Philosophic Vagabond," "could avail me nothing in a

country where every peasant was a better musician than I; but by this time I had acquired another talent, which answered my purpose as well, and this was a skill in disputation. In all the foreign universities and convents there are, upon certain days, philosophical theses maintained against every adventitious disputant, for which, if the champion opposes with any dexterity, he can claim a gratuity in money, a dinner, and a bed for one night." Though a poor wandering scholar, his reception in these learned piles was as free from humiliation as in the cottages of the peasantry. "With the members of these establishments," said he, "I could converse on topics of literature, *and then I always forgot the meanness of my circumstances.*"

At Padua, where he remained some months, he is said to have taken his medical degree. It is probable he was brought to a pause in this city by the illness of his uncle Contarine; who had hitherto assisted him in his wanderings by occasional, though, of course, slender remittances. Deprived of this source of supplies, he wrote to his friends in Ireland, and especially to his brother-in-law, Hodson, describing his destitute situation. His letters brought him neither money nor reply. It appears, from subsequent correspondence, that his brother-in-law actually exerted himself to raise a subscription for his assistance among his relatives, friends, and acquaintance, but without success. Their faith and hope in him were most probably at an end; as yet he had disappointed them at every point, he had given none of the anticipated proofs of talent, and they were too poor to support what they may have considered the wandering propensities of a heedless spendthrift.

Thus left to his own precarious resources, Goldsmith gave up all further wandering in Italy, without visiting the south, though Rome and Naples must have held out powerful attractions to one of his poetical cast. Once more resuming his

pilgrim staff, he turned his face toward England, "walking along from city to city, examining mankind more nearly, and seeing both sides of the picture." In traversing France his flute — his magic flute! — was once more in requisition, as we may conclude by the following passage in his "Traveller":—

"Gay, sprightly land of mirth and social ease,
Pleased with thyself, whom all the world can please,
How often have I led thy sportive choir
With tuneless pipe beside the murmuring Loire!
Where shading elms along the margin grew,
And freshened from the wave the zephyr flew;
And haply though my harsh note falt'ring still,
But mocked all tune, and marr'd the dancer's skill;
Yet would the village praise my wondrous power,
And dance forgetful of the noontide hour.
Alike all ages: Dames of ancient days
Have led their children through the mirthful maze,
And the gay grandsire, skill'd in gestic lore,
Has frisk'd beneath the burden of three-score."

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Goldsmith's improvidence in Holland.

2. His experiences as tutor to the stingy young man.

3. Prepare a detailed outline for a composition on his two years of roving about the Continent. Will it be better to adopt a time succession or a place order in dividing the subject?

4. How did his imprisonment in Newcastle-upon-Tyne save his life?

5. What is Irving's purpose in closing the chapter with a quotation? Why do many compositions by students, and essays or orations by well-known writers or speakers end with quotations of poetry? Is the practice one to be commended?

CHAPTER VI

Landing in England — Shifts of a Man without Money — The Pestle and Mortar — Theatricals in a Barn — Launch upon London — A City Night-Scene — Struggles with Penury — Miseries of a Tutor — A Doctor in the Suburb — Poor Practice and second-hand Finery — A Tragedy in Embryo — Project of the Written Mountains.

After two years spent in roving about the Continent, "pursuing novelty," as he said, "and losing content," Goldsmith landed at Dover early in 1756. He appears to have had no definite plan of action. The death of his uncle Contarine, and the neglect of his relatives and friends to reply to his letters, seem to have produced in him a temporary feeling of loneliness and destitution, and his only thought was to get to London, and throw himself upon the world. But how was he to get there? His purse was empty. England was to him as completely a foreign land as any part of the Continent, and where on earth is a penniless stranger more destitute? His flute and his philosophy were no longer of any avail; the English boors cared nothing for music; there were no convents; and as to the learned and the clergy, not one of them would give a vagrant scholar a supper and night's lodging for the best thesis that ever was argued. "You may easily imagine," says he, in a subsequent letter to his brother-in-law, "what difficulties I had to encounter, left as I was without friends, recommendations, money, or impudence, and that in a country where being born an Irishman was sufficient to keep me unemployed. Many, in such circumstances, would have had recourse to the friar's cord or the suicide's halter. But, with all my follies, I had principle to resist the one, and resolution to combat the other."

He applied at one place, we are told, for employment in the shop of a country apothecary; but all his medical science gathered in foreign universities could not gain him the management of a pestle and mortar. He even resorted, it is said, to the stage as a temporary expedient, and figured in low comedy at a country town in Kent. This accords with his last shift of the Philosophic Vagabond, and with the knowledge of country theatricals displayed in his "Adventures of a Strolling Player," or may be a story suggested by them. All this part of his career, however, in which he must have trod the lowest paths of humility, are only to be conjectured from vague traditions, or scraps of autobiography gleaned from his miscellaneous writings.

At length we find him launched on the great metropolis, or rather drifting about its streets, at night, in the gloomy month of February, with but a few half-pence in his pocket. The Deserts of Arabia are not more dreary and inhospitable than the streets of London at such a time, and to a stranger in such a plight. Do we want a picture as an illustration? We have it in his own works, and furnished, doubtless, from his own experience.

"The clock has just struck two; what a gloom hangs all around! no sound is heard but of the chiming clock, or the distant watch-dog. How few appear in those streets, which but some few hours ago were crowded! But who are those who make the streets their couch, and find a short repose from wretchedness at the doors of the opulent? They are strangers, wanderers, and orphans, whose circumstances are too humble to expect redress, and whose distresses are too great even for pity. Some are without the covering even of rags, and others emaciated with disease; the world has disclaimed them; society turns its back upon their distress, and has given them up to nakedness and hunger. *These poor shivering females have once seen happier days, and been*

flattered into beauty. They are now turned out to meet the severity of winter. Perhaps now, lying at the doors of their betrayers, they sue to wretches whose hearts are insensible, or debauchees who may curse, but will not relieve them.

"Why, why was I born a man, and yet see the sufferings of wretches I cannot relieve! Poor houseless creatures! The world will give you reproaches, but will not give you relief."

Poor houseless Goldsmith! we may here ejaculate — to what shifts he must have been driven to find shelter and sustenance for himself in this his first venture into London! Many years afterwards, in the days of his social elevation, he startled a polite circle at Sir Joshua Reynolds's by humorously dating an anecdote about the time he "lived among the beggars of Axe Lane." Such may have been the desolate quarters with which he was fain to content himself when thus adrift upon the town, with but a few half-pence in his pocket.

The first authentic trace we have of him in this new part of his career, is filling the situation of an usher to a school, and even this employ he obtained with some difficulty, after a reference for a character to his friends in the University of Dublin. In the "Vicar of Wakefield" he makes George Primrose undergo a whimsical catechism concerning the requisites for an usher. "Have you been bred apprentice to the business?" "No." "Then you won't do for a school. Can you dress the boys' hair?" "No." "Then you won't do for a school. Can you lie three in a bed?" "No." "Then you will never do for a school. Have you a good stomach?" "Yes." "Then you will by no means do for a school. I have been an usher in a boarding-school, myself, and may I die of an anodyne necklace, but I had rather be under-turnkey in Newgate. I was up early and late: I was browbeat by the master, hated for my ugly face by the mistress, worried by the boys"

Goldsmith remained but a short time in this situation, and to the mortifications experienced there we doubtless owe the picturings given in his writings of the hardships of an usher's life. "He is generally," says he, "the laughing-stock of the school. Every trick is played upon him; the oddity of his manner, his dress, or his language, is a fund of eternal ridicule; the master himself now and then cannot avoid joining in the laugh; and the poor wretch, eternally resenting this ill-usage, lives in a state of war with all the family." . . . "He is obliged, perhaps, to sleep in the same bed with the French teacher, who disturbs him for an hour every night in papering and filleting his hair, and stinks worse than a carrion with his rancid pomatums, when he lays his head beside him on the bolster."

His next shift was as assistant in the laboratory of a chemist near Fish-Street Hill. After remaining here a few months, he heard that Dr. Sleigh, who had been his friend and fellow-student at Edinburgh, was in London. Eager to meet with a friendly face in this land of strangers, he immediately called on him; "but though it was Sunday, and it is to be supposed I was in my best clothes, Sleigh scarcely knew me — such is the tax the unfortunate pay to poverty. However, when he did recollect me, I found his heart as warm as ever, and he shared his purse and friendship with me during his continuance in London."

Through the advice and assistance of Dr. Sleigh, he now commenced the practice of medicine, but in a small way, in Bankside, Southwark, and chiefly among the poor; for he wanted the figure, address, polish, and management, to succeed among the rich. His old schoolmate and college companion, Beatty, who used to aid him with his purse at the university, met him about this time, decked out in the tarnished finery of a second-hand suit of green and gold, with a shirt and neckcloth of a fortnight's wear.

Poor Goldsmith endeavored to assume a prosperous air in the eyes of his early associate. "He was practising physic," he said, "and *doing very well!*" At this moment poverty was pinching him to the bone in spite of his practice and his dirty finery. His fees were necessarily small and ill paid, and he was fain to seek some precarious assistance from his pen. Here his quondam fellow-student, Dr. Sleigh, was again of service, introducing him to some of the booksellers, who gave him occasional, though starveling, employment. According to tradition, however, his most efficient patron just now was a journeyman printer, one of his poor patients of Bankside, who had formed a good opinion of his talents, and perceived his poverty and his literary shifts. The printer was in the employ of Mr. Samuel Richardson, the author of "Pamela," "Clarissa," and "Sir Charles Grandison"; who combined the novelist and the publisher, and was in flourishing circumstances. Through the journeyman's intervention Goldsmith is said to have become acquainted with Richardson, who employed him as reader and corrector of the press, at his printing establishment in Salisbury Court, — an occupation which he alternated with his medical duties.

Being admitted occasionally to Richardson's parlor, he began to form literary acquaintances, among whom the most important was Dr. Young, the author of "Night Thoughts," a poem in the height of fashion. It is not probable, however, that much familiarity took place at the time between the literary lion of the day and the poor Æsculapius of Bankside, the humble corrector of the press. Still the communion with literary men had its effect to set his imagination teeming. Dr. Farr, one of his Edinburgh fellow-students, who was at London about this time, attending the hospitals and lectures, gives us an amusing account of Goldsmith in his literary character.

"Early in January he called upon me one morning before I was up, and, on my entering the room, I recognized my old acquaintance, dressed in a rusty, full-trimmed black suit, with his pockets full of papers, which instantly reminded me of the poet in Garrick's farce of 'Lethe.' After we had finished our breakfast, he drew from his pocket part of a tragedy, which he said he had brought for my correction. In vain I pleaded inability, when he began to read; and every part on which I expressed a doubt as to the propriety was immediately blotted out. I then most earnestly pressed him not to trust to my judgment, but to take the opinion of persons better qualified to decide on dramatic compositions. He now told me he had submitted his production, so far as he had written, to Mr. Richardson, the author of 'Clarissa,' on which I peremptorily declined offering another criticism on the performance."

From the graphic description given of him by Dr. Farr, it will be perceived that the tarnished finery of green and gold had been succeeded by a professional suit of black, to which, we are told, were added the wig and cane indispensable to medical doctors in those days. The coat was a second-hand one, of rusty velvet, with a patch on the left breast, which he adroitly covered with his three-cornered hat during his medical visits; and we have an amusing anecdote of his contest of courtesy with a patient who persisted in endeavoring to relieve him from the hat, which only made him press it more devoutly to his heart.

Nothing further has ever been heard of the tragedy mentioned by Dr. Farr; it was probably never completed. The same gentleman speaks of a strange Quixotic scheme which Goldsmith had in contemplation at the time, "of going to decipher the inscriptions on the *written mountains*, though he was altogether ignorant of Arabic, or the language in which they might be supposed to be written. "The salary

of three hundred pounds," adds Dr. Farr, "which had been left for the purpose, was the temptation." This was probably one of many dreamy projects with which his fervid brain was apt to teem. On such subjects he was prone to talk vaguely and magnificently, but inconsiderately, from a kindled imagination rather than a well-instructed judgment. He had always a great notion of expeditions to the East, and wonders to be seen and effected in the Oriental countries.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Tell vividly about Goldsmith's "contest of courtesy" with the patient who wanted to relieve him of his hat. In your narrative make use of a dialogue between the patient and the doctor.

2. Give an account of Goldsmith's arrival in London.

CHAPTER VII

Life of a Pedagogue — Kindness to Schoolboys — Pertness in Return — Expensive Charities — The Griffiths and the "Monthly Review" — Toils of a Literary Hack — Rupture with the Griffiths.

Among the most cordial of Goldsmith's intimates in London during this time of precarious struggle, were certain of his former fellow-students in Edinburgh. One of these was the son of a Dr. Milner, a dissenting minister, who kept a classical school of eminence at Peckham, in Surrey. Young Milner had a favorable opinion of Goldsmith's abilities and attainments, and cherished for him that goodwill which his genial nature seems ever to have inspired among his school and college associates. His father falling ill, the young man negotiated with Goldsmith to take temporary charge of the school. The latter readily consented; for he was discouraged by the slow growth of medical reputation and practice, and as yet had no confidence in the coy smiles of the Muse. Laying by his wig and cane, therefore, and once more wielding the ferule, he resumed the character of the pedagogue, and for some time reigned as vicegerent over the academy at Peckham. He appears to have been well treated by both Dr. Milner and his wife; and became a favorite with the scholars from his easy, indulgent good-nature. He mingled in their sports; told them droll stories; played on the flute for their amusement, and spent his money in treating them to sweetmeats and other schoolboy dainties. His familiarity was sometimes carried too far; he indulged in boyish pranks and practical jokes, and drew upon himself retorts in kind, which, however, he bore with great good-humor. Once, indeed, he was touched to the

quick by a piece of schoolboy pertness. After playing on the flute, he spoke with enthusiasm of music, as delightful in itself, and as a valuable accomplishment for a gentleman, whereupon a youngster, with a glance at his ungainly person, wished to know if he considered himself a gentleman. Poor Goldsmith, feelingly alive to the awkwardness of his appearance and the humility of his situation, winced at this unthinking sneer, which long rankled in his mind.

As usual, while in Dr. Milner's employ, his benevolent feelings were a heavy tax upon his purse, for he never could resist a tale of distress, and was apt to be fleeced by every sturdy beggar; so that, between his charity and his munificence, he was generally in advance of his slender salary. "You had better, Mr. Goldsmith, let me take care of your money," said Mrs. Milner one day, "as I do for some of the young gentlemen." "In truth, madam, there is equal need!" was the good-humored reply.

Dr. Milner was a man of some literary pretensions, and wrote occasionally for the "Monthly Review," of which a bookseller, by the name of Griffiths, was proprietor. This work was an advocate for Whig principles, and had been in prosperous existence for nearly eight years. Of late, however, periodicals had multiplied exceedingly, and a formidable Tory rival had started up in the "Critical Review," published by Archibald Hamilton, a bookseller, and aided by the powerful and popular pen of Dr. Smollett. Griffiths was obliged to recruit his forces. While so doing he met Goldsmith, a humble occupant of a seat at Dr. Milner's table, and was struck with remarks on men and books, which fell from him in the course of conversation. He took occasion to sound him privately as to his inclination and capacity as a reviewer, and was furnished by him with specimens of his literary and critical talents. They proved satisfactory. The consequence was that Goldsmith once more changed

his mode of life, and in April, 1757, became a contributor to the "Monthly Review," at a small fixed salary, with board and lodging; and accordingly took up his abode with Mr. Griffiths, at the sign of the Dunciad, Paternoster Row. As usual we trace this phase of his fortunes in his semi-fictitious writings; his sudden transmutation of the pedagogue into the author being humorously set forth in the case of "George Primrose" in the "Vicar of Wakefield." "Come," says George's adviser, "I see you are a lad of spirit and some learning; what do you think of commencing author like me? You have read in books, no doubt, of men of genius starving at the trade: at present I'll show you forty very dull fellows about town that live by it in opulence. All honest, jog-trot men, who go on smoothly and dully, and write history and politics, and are praised: men, sir, who, had they been bred cobblers, would all their lives only have mended shoes, but never made them." "Finding" (says George) "that there was no great degree of gentility affixed to the character of an usher, I resolved to accept his proposal; and, having the highest respect for literature, hailed the *antiqua mater* of Grub Street with reverence. I thought it my glory to pursue a track which Dryden and Otway trod before me." Alas, Dryden struggled with indigence all his days; and Otway, it is said, fell a victim to famine in his thirty-fifth year, being strangled by a roll of bread, which he devoured with the voracity of a starving man.

In Goldsmith's experience the track soon proved a thorny one. Griffiths was a hard business-man, of shrewd, worldly good sense, but little refinement or cultivation. He meddled or rather muddled with literature, too, in a business-way, altering and modifying occasionally the writings of his contributors, and in this he was aided by his wife, who, according to Smollett, was "an antiquated female critic and a

dabbler in the 'Review.'" Such was the literary vassalage to which Goldsmith had unwarily subjected himself. A diurnal drudgery was imposed on him, irksome to his indolent habits, and attended by circumstances humiliating to his pride. He had to write daily from nine o'clock until two, and often throughout the day; whether in the vein or not, and on subjects dictated by his task-master, however foreign to his taste; in a word, he was treated as a mere literary hack. But this was not the worst; it was the critical supervision of Griffiths and his wife, which grieved him; the "illiterate, bookselling Griffiths," as Smollett called them, "who presumed to revise, alter, and amend the articles contributed to their 'Review.' Thank Heaven," crowed Smollett, "the 'Critical Review' is not written under the restraint of a bookseller and his wife. Its principal writers are independent of each other, unconnected with booksellers, and unawed by old women!"

This literary vassalage, however, did not last long. The bookseller became more and more exacting. He accused his hack writer of idleness; of abandoning his writing-desk and literary workshop at an early hour of the day; and of assuming a tone and manner *above his situation*. Goldsmith, in return, charged him with impertinence; his wife, with meanness and parsimony in her household treatment of him, and both of literary meddling and marring. The engagement was broken off at the end of five months, by mutual consent, and without any violent rupture, as it will be found they afterwards had occasional dealings with each other.

Though Goldsmith was now nearly thirty years of age, he had produced nothing to give him a decided reputation. He was as yet a mere writer for bread. The articles he had contributed to the "Review" were anonymous, and were never avowed by him. They have since been, for the most part, ascertained; and though thrown off hastily, often

treating on subjects of temporary interest, and marred by the Griffith interpolations, they are still characterized by his sound, easy good sense, and the genial graces of his style. Johnson observed that Goldsmith's genius flowered late; he should have said it flowered early, but was late in bringing its fruit to maturity.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. In what respects was Goldsmith a gentleman? [Consider in this connection whether Eppie, in the novel "Silas Marner," was a lady, even though she denied all pretensions to the title.]

2. What was the nature of some of Goldsmith's early articles while he was yet "a mere writer for bread"? What is meant by the term "writer for bread"? Do authors ever write for anything else than bread or money?

3. In what city was the greater part of Goldsmith's life spent after his return from the two years of wandering on the Continent? What other English authors, of any period, resided in this same city?

CHAPTER VIII

Newbery, of Picture-Book Memory — How to keep up Appearances — Miseries of Authorship — A poor Relation — Letter to Hodson.

Being now known in the publishing world, Goldsmith began to find casual employment in various quarters; among others he wrote occasionally for the "Literary Magazine," a production set on foot by Mr. John Newbery, bookseller, St. Paul's Churchyard, renowned in nursery literature throughout the latter half of the last century for his picture-books for children. Newbery was a worthy, intelligent, kind-hearted man, and a seasonable, though cautious friend to authors, relieving them with small loans when in pecuniary difficulties, though always taking care to be well repaid by the labor of their pens. Goldsmith introduces him in a humorous yet friendly manner in his novel of the "Vicar of Wakefield." "This person was no other than the philanthropic bookseller in St. Paul's Churchyard, who has written so many little books for children; he called himself their friend; but he was the friend of all mankind. He was no sooner alighted but he was in haste to be gone; for he was ever on business of importance, and was at that time actually compiling materials for the history of one Mr. Thomas Trip. I immediately recollected this good-natured man's red-pimpled face."

Besides his literary job-work, Goldsmith also resumed his medical practice, but with very trifling success. The scantiness of his purse still obliged him to live in obscure lodgings somewhere in the vicinity of Salisbury Square, Fleet Street; but his extended acquaintance and rising importance caused him to consult appearances. He adopted an expedient, then very common, and still practised in London among those

who have to tread the narrow path between pride and poverty: while he burrowed in lodgings suited to his means, he "hailed," as it is termed, from the Temple Exchange Coffee-House near Temple Bar. Here he received his medical calls; hence he dated his letters; and here he passed much of his leisure hours, conversing with the frequenters of the place. "Thirty pounds a year," said a poor Irish painter, who understood the art of shifting, "is enough to enable a man to live in London without being contemptible. Ten pounds will find him in clothes and linen; he can live in a garret on eighteen pence a week; hail from a coffee-house, where, by occasionally spending threepence, he may pass some hours each day in good company; he may breakfast on bread and milk for a penny; dine for sixpence; do without supper; and on *clean-shirt-day* he may go abroad and pay visits."

Goldsmith seems to have taken a leaf from this poor devil's manual in respect to the coffee-house at least. Indeed, coffee-houses in those days were the resorts of wits and *literati;* where the topics of the day were gossiped over, and the affairs of literature and the drama discussed and criticised. In this way he enlarged the circle of his intimacy, which now embraced several names of notoriety.

Do we want a picture of Goldsmith's experience in this part of his career? we have it in his observations on the life of an author in the "Inquiry into the State of Polite Learning," published some years afterwards.

"The author, unpatronized by the great, has naturally recourse to the bookseller. There cannot, perhaps, be imagined a combination more prejudicial to taste than this. It is the interest of the one to allow as little for writing, and for the other to write as much as possible; accordingly, tedious compilations and periodical magazines are the result of their joint endeavors. In these circumstances the author

bids adieu to fame; writes for bread; and for that only imagination is seldom called in. He sits down to address the venal Muse with the most phlegmatic apathy; and, as we are told of the Russian, courts his mistress by falling asleep in her lap."

Again. "Those who are unacquainted with the world are apt to fancy the man of wit as leading a very agreeable life. They conclude, perhaps, that he is attended with silent admiration, and dictates to the rest of mankind with all the eloquence of conscious superiority. Very different is his present situation. He is called an author, and all know that an author is a thing only to be laughed at. His person, not his jest, becomes the mirth of the company. At his approach the most fat, unthinking face brightens into malicious meaning. Even aldermen laugh, and avenge on him the ridicule which was lavished on their forefathers. . . . . The poet's poverty is a standing topic of contempt. His writing for bread is an unpardonable offence. Perhaps of all mankind, an author in these times is used most hardly. We keep him poor, and yet revile his poverty. We reproach him for living by his wit, and yet allow him no other means to live. His taking refuge in garrets and cellars has of late been violently objected to him, and that by men who, I have hope, are more apt to pity than insult his distress. Is poverty a careless fault? No doubt he knows how to prefer a bottle of champagne to the nectar of the neighboring alehouse, or a venison pasty to a plate of potatoes. Want of delicacy is not in him, but in those who deny him the opportunity of making an elegant choice. Wit certainly is the property of those who have it, nor should we be displeased if it is the only property a man sometimes has. We must not underrate him who uses it for subsistence, and flees from the ingratitude of the age, even to a bookseller for redress." . . . .

"If the author be necessary among us, let us treat him with proper consideration as a child of the public, not as a rent-charge on the community. And indeed a child of the public he is in all respects; for while so well able to direct others, how incapable is he frequently found of guiding himself. His simplicity exposes him to all the insidious approaches of cunning: his sensibility, to the slightest invasions of contempt. Though possessed of fortitude to stand unmoved the expected bursts of an earthquake, yet of feelings so exquisitely poignant, as to agonize under the slightest disappointment. Broken rest, tasteless meals, and causeless anxieties shorten life and render it unfit for active employments; prolonged vigils and intense applications still farther contract his span, and make his time glide insensibly away."

While poor Goldsmith was thus struggling with the difficulties and discouragements which in those days beset the path of an author, his friends in Ireland received accounts of his literary success and of the distinguished acquaintances he was making. This was enough to put the wise heads at Lissoy and Ballymahon in a ferment of conjectures. With the exaggerated notions of provincial relatives concerning the family great man in the metropolis, some of Goldsmith's poor kindred pictured him to themselves seated in high places, clothed in purple and fine linen, and hand and glove with the givers of gifts and dispensers of patronage. Accordingly, he was one day surprised at the sudden apparition, in his miserable lodging, of his younger brother Charles, a raw youth of twenty-one, endowed with a double share of the family heedlessness, and who expected to be forthwith helped into some snug by-path to fortune by one or other of Oliver's great friends. Charles was sadly disconcerted on learning that, so far from being able to provide for others, his brother could scarcely take care of himself.

He looked round with a rueful eye on the poet's quarters, and could not help expressing his surprise and disappointment at finding him no better off. "All in good time, my dear boy," replied poor Goldsmith, with infinite good-humor; "I shall be richer by-and-by. Addison, let me tell you, wrote his poem of the 'Campaign' in a garret in the Haymarket, three stories high, and you see I am not come to that yet, for I have only got to the second story."

Charles Goldsmith did not remain long to embarrass his brother in London. With the same roving disposition and inconsiderate temper of Oliver, he suddenly departed in an humble capacity to seek his fortune in the West Indies, and nothing was heard of him for above thirty years, when, after having been given up as dead by his friends, he made his reappearance in England.

Shortly after his departure, Goldsmith wrote a letter to his brother-in-law, Daniel Hodson, Esq., of which the following is an extract; it was partly intended, no doubt, to dissipate any further illusions concerning his fortunes which might float on the magnificent imagination of his friends in Ballymahon.

"I suppose you desire to know my present situation. As there is nothing in it at which I should blush or which mankind could censure, I see no reason for making it a secret. In short, by a very little practice as a physician, and a very little reputation as a poet, I make a shift to live. Nothing is more apt to introduce us to the gates of the Muses than poverty; but it were well if they only left us at the door. The mischief is, they sometimes choose to give us their company to the entertainment; and want, instead of being gentleman-usher, often turns master of the ceremonies.

"Thus, upon learning I write, no doubt you imagine I starve; and the name of an author naturally reminds you of a garret. In this particular I do not think proper to undeceive my friends. But, whether I eat or starve, live in a

first floor or four pairs of stairs high, I still remember them with ardor; nay, my very country comes in for a share of my affection. Unaccountable fondness for country, this *maladie du pais*, as the French call it! Unaccountable that he should still have an affection for a place, who never, when in it, received above common civility; who never brought anything out of it except his brogue and his blunders. Surely my affection is equally ridiculous with the Scotchman's, who refused to be cured of the itch because it made him unco' thoughtful of his wife and bonny Inverary.

"But, now, to be serious: let me ask myself what gives me a wish to see Ireland again. The country is a fine one, perhaps? No. There are good company in Ireland? No. The conversation there is generally made up of a smutty toast or a bawdy song; the vivacity supported by some humble cousin, who had just folly enough to earn his dinner. Then, perhaps, there 's more wit and learning among the Irish? Oh, Lord, no! There has been more money spent in the encouragement of the Padareen mare there one season, than given in rewards to learned men since the time of Usher. All their productions in learning amount to perhaps a translation, or a few tracts in divinity; and all their productions in wit to just nothing at all. Why the plague, then, so fond of Ireland? Then, all at once, because you, my dear friend, and a few more who are exceptions to the general picture, have a residence there. This it is that gives me all the pangs I feel in separation. I confess I carry this spirit sometimes to the souring the pleasures I at present possess. If I go to the opera, where Signora Columba pours out all the mazes of melody, I sit and sigh for Lissoy fireside, and Johnny Armstrong's 'Last Goodnight' from Peggy Golden. If I climb Hampstead Hill, than where nature never exhibited a more magnificent prospect, I confess it fine; but then I had rather be placed on

the little mount before Lissoy gate, and there take in, to me, the most pleasing horizon in nature.

"Before Charles came hither, my thoughts sometimes found refuge from severer studies among my friends in Ireland. I fancied strange revolutions at home; but I find it was the rapidity of my own motion that gave an imaginary one to objects really at rest. No alterations there. Some friends, he tells me, are still lean, but very rich; others very fat, but still very poor. Nay, all the news I hear of you is, that you sally out in visits among the neighbors, and sometimes make a migration from the blue bed to the brown. I could from my heart wish that you and she (Mrs. Hodson), and Lissoy and Ballymahon, and all of you, would fairly make a migration into Middlesex; though, upon second thoughts, this might be attended with a few inconveniences. Therefore, as the mountain will not come to Mohammed, why Mohammed shall go to the mountain; or, to speak plain English, as you cannot conveniently pay me a visit, if next summer I can contrive to be absent six weeks from London, I shall spend three of them among my friends in Ireland. But first, believe me, my design is purely to visit, and neither to cut a figure nor levy contributions; neither to excite envy nor solicit favor; in fact, my circumstances are adapted to neither. I am too poor to be gazed at, and too rich to need assistance."

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Goldsmith's struggle for recognition among the publishers.

2. What adverb does Irving use most frequently in order to avoid specific statements about how much time is elapsing in the biography?

3. Is the phrase "much of his leisure hours" good English?

CHAPTER IX

Hackney Authorship — Thoughts of Literary Suicide — Return to Peckham — Oriental Projects — Literary Enterprise to raise Funds — Letter to Edward Mills; to Robert Bryanton — Death of Uncle Contarine — Letter to Cousin Jane.

For some time Goldsmith continued to write miscellaneously for reviews and other periodical publications, but without making any decided hit, to use a technical term. Indeed as yet he appeared destitute of the strong excitement of literary ambition, and wrote only on the spur of necessity and at the urgent importunity of his bookseller. His indolent and truant disposition, ever averse from labor and delighting in holiday, had to be scourged up to its task; still it was this very truant disposition which threw an unconscious charm over everything he wrote; bringing with it honeyed thoughts and pictured images which had sprung up in his mind in the sunny hours of idleness: these effusions, dashed off on compulsion in the exigency of the moment, were published anonymously; so that they made no collective impression on the public, and reflected no fame on the name of their author.

In an essay published some time subsequently in the "Bee," Goldsmith adverts in his own humorous way to his impatience at the tardiness with which his desultory and unacknowledged essays crept into notice. "I was once induced," says he, "to show my indignation against the public by discontinuing my efforts to please; and was bravely resolved, like Raleigh, to vex them by burning my manuscripts in a passion. Upon reflection, however, I considered what set or body of people would be displeased at

my rashness. The sun, after so sad an accident, might shine next morning as bright as usual; men might laugh and sing the next day, and transact business as before; and not a single creature feel any regret but myself. Instead of having Apollo in mourning or the Muses in a fit of the spleen; instead of having the learned world apostrophizing at my untimely decease; perhaps all Grub Street might laugh at my fate, and self-approving dignity be unable to shield me from ridicule."

Circumstances occurred about this time to give a new direction to Goldsmith's hopes and schemes. Having resumed for a brief period the superintendence of the Peckham school, during a fit of illness of Dr. Milner, that gentleman, in requital for his timely services, promised to use his influence with a friend, an East-India director, to procure him a medical appointment in India.

There was every reason to believe that the influence of Dr. Milner would be effectual; but how was Goldsmith to find the ways and means of fitting himself out for a voyage to the Indies? In this emergency he was driven to a more extended exercise of the pen than he had yet attempted. His skirmishing among books as a reviewer, and his disputatious ramble among the schools and universities and *literati* of the Continent, had filled his mind with facts and observations which he now set about digesting into a treatise of some magnitude, to be entitled "An Inquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe." As the work grew on his hands, his sanguine temper ran ahead of his labors. Feeling secure of success in England, he was anxious to forestall the piracy of the Irish press; for as yet, the union not having taken place, the English law of copyright did not extend to the other side of the Irish channel. He wrote, therefore, to his friends in Ireland, urging them to circulate his proposals for his contemplated work, and

obtain subscriptions payable in advance; the money to be transmitted to a Mr. Bradley, an eminent bookseller in Dublin, who would give a receipt for it and be accountable for the delivery of the books. The letters written by him on this occasion are worthy of copious citation as being full of character and interest. One was to his relative and college intimate, Edward Mills, who had studied for the bar, but was now living at ease on his estate at Roscommon. "You have quitted," writes Goldsmith, "the plan of life which you once intended to pursue, and given up ambition for domestic tranquillity. I cannot avoid feeling some regret that one of my few friends has declined a pursuit in which he had every reason to expect success. I have often let my fancy loose when you were the subject, and have imagined you gracing the bench, or thundering at the bar: while I have taken no small pride to myself, and whispered to all that I could come near, that this was my cousin. Instead of this, it seems, you are merely contented to be a happy man; to be esteemed by your acquaintances; to cultivate your paternal acres; to take unmolested a nap under one of your own hawthorns, or in Mrs. Mills's bedchamber, which, even a poet must confess, is rather the more comfortable place of the two. But, however your resolutions may be altered with regard to your situation in life, I persuade myself they are unalterable with respect to your friends in it. I cannot think the world has taken such entire possession of that heart (once so susceptible of friendship) as not to have left a corner there for a friend or two, but I flatter myself that even I have a place among the number. This I have a claim to from the similitude of our dispositions; or setting that aside, I can demand it as a right by the most equitable law of nature: I mean that of retaliation; for indeed you have more than your share in mine. I am a man of few professions; and yet at this very instant I cannot

avoid the painful apprehension that my present professions (which speak not half my feelings) should be considered only as a pretext to cover a request, as I have a request to make. No, my dear Ned, I know you are too generous to think so, and you know me too proud to stoop to unnecessary insincerity; — I have a request, it is true, to make; but as I know to whom I am a petitioner, I make it without diffidence or confusion. It is in short this: I am going to publish a book in London," &c. The residue of the letter specifies the nature of the request, which was merely to aid in circulating his proposals and obtaining subscriptions. The letter of the poor author, however, was unattended to and unacknowledged by the prosperous Mr. Mills, of Roscommon, though in after-years he was proud to claim relationship to Dr. Goldsmith, when he had risen to celebrity.

Another of Goldsmith's letters was to Robert Bryanton, with whom he had long ceased to be in correspondence. "I believe," writes he, "that they who are drunk, or out of their wits, fancy everybody else in the same condition. Mine is a friendship that neither distance nor time can efface, which is probably the reason that, for the soul of me, I can't avoid thinking yours of the same complexion; and yet I have many reasons for being of a contrary opinion, else why, in so long an absence, was I never made a partner in your concerns? To hear of your success would have given me the utmost pleasure; and a communication of your very disappointments would divide the uneasiness I too frequently feel for my own. Indeed, my dear Bob, you don't conceive how unkindly you have treated one whose circumstances afford him few prospects of pleasure, except those reflected from the happiness of his friends. However, since you have not let me hear from you, I have in some measure disappointed your neglect by frequently thinking of you. Every day or so I remember the calm anecdotes of your life,

from the fireside to the easy-chair; recall the various adventures that first cemented our friendship; the school, the college, or the tavern; preside in fancy over your cards; and am displeased at your bad play when the rubber goes against you, though not with all that agony of soul as when I was once your partner. Is it not strange that two of such like affections should be so much separated, and so differently employed as we are? You seem placed at the centre of fortune's wheel, and, let it revolve ever so fast, are insensible of the motion. I seem to have been tied to the circumference, and whirled disagreeably around, as if on a whirligig."

He then runs into a whimsical and extravagant tirade about his future prospects, The wonderful career of fame and fortune that awaits him, and after indulging in all kinds of humorous gasconades, concludes: "Let me, then, stop my fancy to take a view of my future self, — and, as the boys say, light down to see myself on horseback. Well, now that I am down, where the d—l *is I?* Oh gods! gods! here in a garret, writing for bread, and expecting to be dunned for a milk score!"

He would, on this occasion, have doubtless written to his uncle Contarine, but that generous friend was sunk into a helpless hopeless state from which death soon released him.

Cut off thus from the kind coöperation of his uncle, he addresses a letter to his daughter Jane, the companion of his school-boy and happy days, now the wife of Mr. Lawder. The object was to secure her interest with her husband in promoting the circulation of his proposals. The letter is full of character.

"If you should ask," he begins, "why, in an interval of so many years, you never heard from me, permit me, madam, to ask the same question. I have the best excuse in recrimination. I wrote to Kilmore from Leyden in Holland, from Louvain in Flanders, and Rouen in France, but received

no answer. To what could I attribute this silence but to displeasure or forgetfulness? Whether I was right in my conjecture I do not pretend to determine; but this I must ingenuously own, that I have a thousand times in my turn endeavored to forget *them*, whom I could not but look upon as forgetting *me*. I have attempted to blot their names from my memory, and, I confess it, spent whole days in efforts to tear their image from my heart. Could I have succeeded, you had not now been troubled with this renewal of a discontinued correspondence; but, as every effort the restless make to procure sleep serves but to keep them waking, all my attempts contributed to impress what I would forget deeper on my imagination. But this subject I would willingly turn from, and yet, 'for the soul of me,' I can't till I have said all. I was, madam, when I discontinued writing to Kilmore, in such circumstances, that all my endeavors to continue your regards might be attributed to wrong motives. My letters might be looked upon as the petitions of a beggar, and not the offerings of a friend; while all my professions, instead of being considered as the result of disinterested esteem, might be ascribed to venal insincerity. I believe, indeed, you had too much generosity to place them in such a light, but I could not bear even the shadow of such a suspicion. The most delicate friendships are always most sensible of the slightest invasion, and the strongest jealousy is ever attendant on the warmest regard. I could not — I own I could not — continue a correspondence in which every acknowledgment for past favors might be considered as an indirect request for future ones; and where it might be thought I gave my heart from a motive of gratitude alone, when I was conscious of having bestowed it on much more disinterested principles. It is true, this conduct might have been simple enough; but yourself must confess it was in character. Those who know me at all, know that I have always

been actuated by different principles from the rest of mankind: and while none regarded the interest of his friend more, no man on earth regarded his own less. I have often affected bluntness to avoid the imputation of flattery; have frequently seemed to overlook those merits too obvious to escape notice, and pretended disregard to those instances of good nature and good sense, which I could not fail tacitly to applaud; and all this lest I should be ranked among the grinning tribe, who say 'very true' to all that is said; who fill a vacant chair at a tea-table; whose narrow souls never moved in a wider circle than the circumference of a guinea; and who had rather be reckoning the money in your pocket than the virtue in your breast. All this, I say, I have done, and a thousand other very silly, though very disinterested, things in my time; and for all which no soul cares a farthing about me. . . . . Is it to be wondered that he should once in his life forget you, who has been all his life forgetting himself? However, it is probable you may one of these days see me turned into a perfect hunks, and as dark and intricate as a mouse-hole. I have already given my landlady orders for an entire reform in the state of my finances. I declaim against hot suppers, drink less sugar in my tea, and check my grate with brickbats. Instead of hanging my room with pictures, I intend to adorn it with maxims of frugality. Those will make pretty furniture enough, and won't be a bit too expensive; for I will draw them all out with my own hands, and my landlady's daughter shall frame them with the parings of my black waistcoat. Each maxim is to be inscribed on a sheet of clean paper, and wrote with my best pen; of which the following will serve as a specimen. *Look sharp: Mind the main chance: Money is money now: If you have a thousand pounds you can put your hands by your sides, and say you are worth a thousand pounds every day of the year: Take a farthing from a hundred and it will be a hundred no longer.* Thus, which way

soever I turn my eyes, they are sure to meet one of those friendly monitors; and as we are told of an actor who hung his room round with looking-glass to correct the defects of his person, my apartment shall be furnished in a peculiar manner, to correct the errors of my mind. Faith! madam, I heartily wish to be rich, if it were only for this reason, to say without a blush how much I esteem you. But, alas! I have many a fatigue to encounter before that happy time comes, when your poor old simple friend may again give a loose to the luxuriance of his nature; sitting by Kilmore fireside, recount the various adventures of a hard-fought life; laugh over the follies of the day; join his flute to your harpsichord; and forget that ever he starved in those streets where Butler and Otway starved before him. And now I mention those great names — my Uncle! he is no more that soul of fire as when I once knew him. Newton and Swift grew dim with age as well as he. But what shall I say? His mind was too active an inhabitant not to disorder the feeble mansion of its abode; for the richest jewels soonest wear their settings. Yet, who but the fool would lament his condition! He now forgets the calamities of life. Perhaps indulgent Heaven has given him a foretaste of that tranquillity here, which he so well deserves hereafter. But I must come to business; for business, as one of my maxims tells me, must be minded or lost. I am going to publish in London a book entitled "The Present State of Taste and Literature in Europe." The booksellers in Ireland republish every performance there without making the author any consideration. I would, in this respect, disappoint their avarice, and have all the profits of my labor to myself. I must, therefore, request Mr. Lawder to circulate among his friends and acquaintances a hundred of my proposals, which I have given the bookseller, Mr. Bradley, in Dame Street, directions to send to him. If, in pursuance of such circulation, he should

receive any subscriptions, I entreat, when collected, they may be sent to Mr. Bradley, as aforesaid, who will give a receipt, and be accountable for the work, or a return of the subscription. If this request (which, if it be complied with, will in some measure be an encouragement to a man of learning) should be disagreeable or troublesome, I would not press it; for I would be the last man on earth to have my labors go a-begging; but if I know Mr. Lawder (and sure I ought to know him), he will accept the employment with pleasure. All I can say — if he writes a book, I will get him two hundred subscribers, and those of the best wits in Europe. Whether this request is complied with or not, I shall not be uneasy; but there is one petition I must make to him and to you, which I solicit with the warmest ardor, and in which I cannot bear a refusal. I mean, dear madam, that I may be allowed to subscribe myself, your ever affectionate and obliged kinsman, OLIVER GOLDSMITH. Now see how I blot and blunder, when I am asking a favor."

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. What did Goldsmith say in his letters of this time? Does it seem strange that the letters should have been preserved? Were they probably written with an eye to future publication?

2. Why did Goldsmith wish a medical appointment in India? Was he well qualified to undertake such work?

3. Of what value are the maxims written by Goldsmith to his cousin Jane?

4. What work did many booksellers of Goldsmith's time perform beside selling books?

CHAPTER X

Oriental Appointment; and Disappointment — Examination at the College of Surgeons — How to procure a Suit of Clothes — Fresh Disappointment — A Tale of Distress — The Suit of Clothes in Pawn — Punishment for doing an Act of Charity — Gayeties of Green Arbor Court — Letter to his Brother — Life of Voltaire — Scroggin, an Attempt at mock-heroic Poetry.

While Goldsmith was yet laboring at his treatise, the promise made him by Dr. Milner was carried into effect, and he was actually appointed physician and surgeon to one of the factories on the coast of Coromandel. His imagination was immediately on fire with visions of Oriental wealth and magnificence. It is true the salary did not exceed one hundred pounds, but then, as appointed physician, he would have the exclusive practice of the place, amounting to one thousand pounds per annum; with advantages to be derived from trade and from the high interest of money — twenty per cent.; in a word, for once in his life, the road to fortune lay broad and straight before him.

Hitherto, in his correspondence with his friends, he had said nothing of his India scheme; but now he imparted to them his brilliant prospects, urging the importance of their circulating his proposals and obtaining him subscriptions and advances on his forthcoming work, to furnish funds for his outfit.

In the mean time he had to task that poor drudge, his Muse, for present exigencies. Ten pounds were demanded for his appointment-warrant. Other expenses pressed hard upon him. Fortunately, though as yet unknown to fame, his literary capability was known to "the trade," and the coinage of his brain passed current in Grub Street. Archibald

Hamilton, proprietor of the "Critical Review," the rival to that of Griffiths, readily made him a small advance on receiving three articles for his periodical. His purse thus slenderly replenished, Goldsmith paid for his warrant; wiped off the score of his milkmaid; abandoned his garret, and moved into a shabby first floor in a forlorn court near the Old Bailey; there to await the time of his migration to the magnificent coast of Coromandel.

Alas! poor Goldsmith! ever doomed to disappointment. Early in the gloomy month of November, that month of fog and despondency in London, he learnt the shipwreck of his hope. The great Coromandel enterprise fell through; or rather the post promised to him was transferred to some other candidate. The cause of this disappointment it is now impossible to ascertain. The death of his *quasi* patron, Dr. Milner, which happened about this time, may have had some effect in producing it; or there may have been some heedlessness and blundering on his own part; or some obstacle arising from his insuperable indigence; — whatever may have been the cause, he never mentioned it, which gives some ground to surmise that he himself was to blame. His friends learnt with surprise that he had suddenly relinquished his appointment to India, about which he had raised such sanguine expectations: some accused him of fickleness and caprice; others supposed him unwilling to tear himself from the growing fascinations of the literary society of London.

In the mean time, cut down in his hopes, and humiliated in his pride by the failure of his Coromandel scheme, he sought, without consulting his friends, to be examined at the College of Physicians for the humble situation of hospital mate. Even here poverty stood in his way. It was necessary to appear in a decent garb before the examining committee; but how was he to do so? He was literally out

at elbows as well as out of cash. Here again the Muse, so often jilted and neglected by him, came to his aid. In consideration of four articles furnished to the "Monthly Review," Griffiths, his old task-master, was to become his security to the tailor for a suit of clothes. Goldsmith said he wanted them but for a single occasion, upon which depended his appointment to a situation in the army; as soon as that temporary purpose was served they would either be returned or paid for. The books to be reviewed were accordingly lent to him; the Muse was again set to her compulsory drudgery; the articles were scribbled off and sent to the bookseller, and the clothes came in due time from the tailor.

From the records of the College of Surgeons, it appears that Goldsmith underwent his examination at Surgeons' Hall, on the 21st of December, 1758. Either from a confusion of mind incident to sensitive and imaginative persons on such occasions, or from a real want of surgical science, which last is extremely probable, he failed in his examination, and was rejected as unqualified. The effect of such a rejection was to disqualify him for every branch of public service, though he might have claimed a reëxamination, after the interval of a few months devoted to further study. Such a reëxamination he never attempted, nor did he ever communicate his discomfiture to any of his friends.

On Christmas-Day, but four days after his rejection by the College of Surgeons, while he was suffering under the mortification of defeat and disappointment, and hard pressed for means of subsistence, he was surprised by the entrance into his room of the poor woman of whom he hired his wretched apartment, and to whom he owed some small arrears of rent. She had a piteous tale of distress, and was clamorous in her afflictions. Her husband had been arrested in the night for debt, and thrown into prison. This

was too much for the quick feelings of Goldsmith; he was ready at any time to help the distressed, but in this instance he was himself in some measure a cause of the distress. What was to be done? He had no money, it is true; but there hung the new suit of clothes in which he had stood his unlucky examination at Surgeons' Hall. Without giving himself time for reflection, he sent it off to the pawnbroker's, and raised thereon a sufficient sum to pay off his own debt, and to release his landlord from prison.

Under the same pressure of penury and despondency, he borrowed from a neighbor a pittance to relieve his immediate wants, leaving as a security the books which he had recently reviewed. In the midst of these straits and harassments, he received a letter from Griffiths, demanding, in peremptory terms, the return of the clothes and books, or immediate payment for the same. It appears that he had discovered the identical suit at the pawnbroker's. The reply of Goldsmith is not known; it was out of his power to furnish either the clothes or the money; but he probably offered once more to make the Muse stand his bail. His reply only increased the ire of the wealthy man of trade, and drew from him another letter still more harsh than the first; using the epithets of knave and sharper, and containing threats of prosecution and a prison.

The following letter from poor Goldsmith gives the most touching picture of an inconsiderate but sensitive man, harassed by care, stung by humiliations, and driven almost to despondency.

"Sir, — I know of no misery but a jail to which my own imprudences and your letter seem to point. I have seen it inevitable these three or four weeks, and, by heavens! request it as a favor — as a favor that may prevent something more fatal. I have been some years struggling with

a wretched being — with all that contempt that indigence brings with it — with all those passions which make contempt insupportable. What, then, has a jail that is formidable? I shall at least have the society of wretches, and such is to me true society. I tell you, again and again, that I am neither able nor willing to pay you a farthing, but I will be punctual to any appointment you or the tailor shall make; thus far, at least, I do not act the sharper, since, unable to pay my own debts one way, I would generally give some security another. No, sir; had I been a sharper — had I been possessed of less good-nature and native generosity, I might surely now have been in better circumstances.

"I am guilty, I own, of meannesses which poverty unavoidably brings with it: my reflections are filled with repentance for my imprudence, but not with any remorse for being a villain: that may be a character you unjustly charge me with. Your books, I can assure you, are neither pawned nor sold, but in the custody of a friend, from whom my necessities obliged me to borrow some money: whatever becomes of my person, you shall have them in a month. It is very possible both the reports you have heard and your own suggestions may have brought you false information with respect to my character; it is very possible that the man whom you now regard with detestation may inwardly burn with grateful resentment. It is very possible that, upon a second perusal of the letter I sent you, you may see the workings of a mind strongly agitated with gratitude and jealousy. If such circumstances should appear, at least spare invective till my book with Mr. Dodsley shall be published, and then, perhaps, you may see the bright side of a mind, when my professions shall not appear the dictates of necessity, but of choice.

"You seem to think Dr. Milner knew me not. Perhaps so; but he was a man I shall ever honor; but I have

friendships only with the dead! I ask pardon for taking up so much time; nor shall I add to it by any other professions than that I am, sir, your humble servant,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"P. S. — I shall expect impatiently the result of your resolutions."

The dispute between the poet and the publisher was afterward imperfectly adjusted, and it would appear that the clothes were paid for by a short compilation advertised by Griffiths in the course of the following month; but the parties were never really friends afterward, and the writings of Goldsmith were harshly and unjustly treated in the "Monthly Review."

We have given the preceding anecdote in detail, as furnishing one of the many instances in which Goldsmith's prompt and benevolent impulses outran all prudent forecast, and involved him in difficulties and disgraces which a more selfish man would have avoided. The pawning of the clothes, charged upon him as a crime by the grinding bookseller, and apparently admitted by him as one of "the meannesses which poverty unavoidably brings with it," resulted, as we have shown, from a tenderness of heart and generosity of hand, in which another man would have gloried; but these were such natural elements with him, that he was unconscious of their merit. It is a pity that wealth does not oftener bring such "meannesses" in its train.

And now let us be indulged in a few particulars about these lodgings in which Goldsmith was guilty of this thoughtless act of benevolence. They were in a very shabby house, No. 12 Green Arbor Court, between the Old Bailey and Fleet Market. An old woman was still living in 1820 who was a relative of the identical landlady whom Goldsmith relieved by the money received from the pawnbroker. She was a

child about seven years of age at the time that the poet rented his apartment of her relative, and used frequently to be at the house in Green Arbor Court. She was drawn there, in a great measure, by the good-humored kindness of Goldsmith, who was always exceedingly fond of the society of children. He used to assemble those of the family in his room, give them cakes and sweetmeats, and set them dancing to the sound of his flute. He was very friendly to those around him, and cultivated a kind of intimacy with a watchmaker in the Court, who possessed much native wit and humor. He passed most of the day, however, in his room, and only went out in the evenings. His days were no doubt devoted to the drudgery of the pen, and it would appear that he occasionally found the booksellers urgent task-masters. On one occasion a visitor was shown up to his room, and immediately their voices were heard in high altercation, and the key was turned within the lock. The landlady, at first, was disposed to go to the assistance of her lodger; but a calm succeeding, she forbore to interfere.

Late in the evening the door was unlocked; a supper ordered by the visitor from a neighboring tavern, and Goldsmith and his intrusive guest finished the evening in great good-humor. It was probably his old task-master Griffiths, whose press might have been waiting, and who found no other mode of getting a stipulated task from Goldsmith than by locking him in, and staying by him until it was finished.

But we have a more particular account of these lodgings in Green Arbor Court from the Rev. Thomas Percy, afterward Bishop of Dromore, and celebrated for his relics of ancient poetry, his beautiful ballads, and other works. During an occasional visit to London, he was introduced to Goldsmith by Grainger, and ever after continued one of his most steadfast and valued friends. The following is his description of the poet's squalid apartment: "I called on

Goldsmith at his lodgings in March, 1759, and found him writing his 'Inquiry,' in a miserable, dirty-looking room, in which there was but one chair; and when, from civility, he resigned it to me, he himself was obliged to sit in the window. While we were conversing together, some one tapped gently at the door, and, being desired to come in, a poor, ragged little girl, of a very becoming demeanor, entered the room, and dropping a courtesy, said, 'My mamma sends her compliments, and begs the favor of you to lend her a chamber-pot full of coals.'"

We are reminded in this anecdote of Goldsmith's picture of the lodgings of Beau Tibbs, and of the peep into the secrets of a make-shift establishment given to a visitor by the blundering old Scotch woman.

"By this time we were arrived as high as the stairs would permit us to ascend, till we came to what he was facetiously pleased to call the first floor down the chimney; and, knocking at the door, a voice from within demanded 'Who's there?' My conductor answered that it was him. But this not satisfying the querist, the voice again repeated the demand, to which he answered louder than before; and now the door was opened by an old woman with cautious reluctance.

"When we got in, he welcomed me to his house with great ceremony; and, turning to the old woman, asked where was her lady. 'Good troth,' replied she, in a peculiar dialect, 'she's washing your twa shirts at the next door, because they have taken an oath against lending the tub any longer.' 'My two shirts,' cried he, in a tone that faltered with confusion; 'what does the idiot mean?' 'I ken what I mean weel enough,' replied the other; 'she's washing your twa shirts at the next door, because'— 'Fire and fury! no more of thy stupid explanations,' cried he; 'go and inform her we have company. Were that Scotch hag to be forever in my

family, she would never learn politeness, nor forget that absurd poisonous accent of hers, or testify the smallest specimen of breeding or high life; and yet it is very surprising too, as I had her from a Parliament man, a friend of mine from the Highlands, one of the politest men in the world: but that 's a secret.' " [1]

Let us linger a little in Green Arbor Court, a place consecrated by the genius and the poverty of Goldsmith, but recently obliterated in the course of modern improvements. The writer of this memoir visited it not many years since on a literary pilgrimage, and may be excused for repeating a description of it which he has heretofore inserted in another publication. "It then existed in its pristine state, and was a small square of tall and miserable houses, the very intestines of which seemed turned inside out, to judge from the old garments and frippery that fluttered from every window. It appeared to be a region of washerwomen, and lines were stretched about the little square, on which clothes were dangling to dry.

"Just as we entered the square, a scuffle took place between two viragoes about a disputed right to a wash-tub, and immediately the whole community was in a hubbub. Heads in mob-caps popped out of every window, and such a clamor of tongues ensued that I was fain to stop my ears. Every amazon took part with one or other of the disputants, and brandished her arms, dripping with soapsuds, and fired away from her window as from the embrasure of a fortress; while the screams of children nestled and cradled in every procreant chamber of this hive, waking with the noise, set up their shrill pipes to swell the general concert." [2]

While in these forlorn quarters, suffering under extreme depression of spirits, caused by his failure at Surgeons' Hall,

[1] Citizen of the World, letter iv.

[2] Tales of a Traveller.

the disappointment of his hopes, and his harsh collisions with Griffiths, Goldsmith wrote the following letter to his brother Henry, some parts of which are most touchingly mournful.

"Dear Sir, —

"Your punctuality in answering a man whose trade is writing, is more than I had reason to expect; and yet you see me generally fill a whole sheet, which is all the recompense I can make for being so frequently troublesome. The behavior of Mr. Mills and Mr. Lawder is a little extraordinary. However, their answering neither you nor me is a sufficient indication of their disliking the employment which I assigned them. As their conduct is different from what I had expected, so I have made an alteration in mine. I shall, the beginning of next month, send over two hundred and fifty books,[1] which are all that I fancy can be well sold among you, and I would have you make some distinction in the persons who have subscribed. The money, which will amount to sixty pounds, may be left with Mr. Bradley as soon as possible. I am not certain but I shall quickly have occasion for it.

"I have met with no disappointment with respect to my East India voyage, nor are my resolutions altered; though, at the same time, I must confess, it gives me some pain to think I am almost beginning the world at the age of thirty-one. Though I never had a day's sickness since I saw you, yet I am not that strong, active man you once knew me. You scarcely can conceive how much eight years of disappointment, anguish, and study have worn me down. If I remember right, you are seven or eight years older than me, yet I dare venture to say, that, if a stranger saw us both, he

[1] The "Inquiry into Polite Literature." His previous remarks apply to the subscription.

would pay me the honors of seniority. Imagine to yourself a pale, melancholy visage, with two great wrinkles between the eyebrows, with an eye disgustingly severe, and a big wig, and you may have a perfect picture of my present appearance. On the other hand, I conceive you as perfectly sleek and healthy, passing many a happy day among your own children, or those who knew you a child.

"Since I knew what it was to be a man, this is a pleasure I have not known. I have passed my days among a parcel of cool, designing beings, and have contracted all their suspicious manner in my own behavior. I should actually be as unfit for the society of my friends at home, as I detest that which I am obliged to partake of here. I can now neither partake of the pleasure of a revel, or contribute to raise its jollity. I can neither laugh nor drink; have contracted a hesitating, disagreeable manner of speaking, and a visage that looks ill-nature itself; in short, I have thought myself into a settled melancholy, and an utter disgust of all that life brings with it. Whence this romantic turn that all our family are possessed with? Whence this love for every place and every country but that in which we reside — for every occupation but our own? this desire of fortune, and yet this eagerness to dissipate? I perceive, my dear sir, that I am at intervals for indulging this splenetic manner, and following my own taste, regardless of yours.

"The reasons you have given me for breeding up your son a scholar are judicious and convincing; I should, however, be glad to know for what particular profession he is designed. If he be assiduous and divested of strong passions (for passions in youth always lead to pleasure), he may do very well in your college; for it must be owned that the industrious poor have good encouragement there, perhaps better than in any other in Europe. But if he has ambition, strong passions, and an exquisite sensibility of contempt, do

not send him there, unless you have no other trade for him but your own. It is impossible to conceive how much may be done by proper education at home. A boy, for instance, who understands perfectly well Latin, French, arithmetic, and the principles of the civil law, and can write a fine hand, has an education that may qualify him for any undertaking; and these parts of learning should be carefully inculcated, let him be designed for whatever calling he will.

"Above all things, let him never touch a romance or novel: these paint beauty in colors more charming than nature, and describe happiness that man never tastes. How delusive, how destructive are those pictures of consummate bliss! They teach the youthful mind to sigh after beauty and happiness that never existed; to despise the little good which fortune has mixed in our cup, by expecting more than she ever gave; and, in general, take the word of a man who has seen the world, and who has studied human nature more by experience than precept; take my word for it, I say, that books teach us very little of the world. The greatest merit in a state of poverty would only serve to make the possessor ridiculous — may distress, but cannot relieve him. Frugality, and even avarice, in the lower orders of mankind, are true ambition. These afford the only ladder for the poor to rise to preferment. Teach then, my dear sir, to your son, thrift and economy. Let his poor wandering uncle's example be placed before his eyes. I had learned from books to be disinterested and generous, before I was taught from experience the necessity of being prudent. I had contracted the habits and notions of a philosopher, while I was exposing myself to the approaches of insidious cunning; and often by being, even with my narrow finances, charitable to excess, I forgot the rules of justice, and placed myself in the very situation of the wretch who thanked me for my bounty. When I am in the remotest part of the world, tell him this,

and perhaps he may improve from my example. But I find myself again falling into my gloomy habits of thinking.

"My mother, I am informed, is almost blind; even though I had the utmost inclination to return home, under such circumstances I could not, for to behold her in distress without a capacity of relieving her from it, would add much to my splenetic habit. Your last letter was much too short; it should have answered some queries I had made in my former. Just sit down as I do, and write forward until you have filled all your paper. It requires no thought, at least from the ease with which my own sentiments rise when they are addressed to you. For, believe me, my head has no share in all I write; my heart dictates the whole. Pray give my love to Bob Bryanton, and entreat him from me not to drink. My dear sir, give me some account about poor Jenny.[1] Yet her husband loves her: if so, she cannot be unhappy.

"I know not whether I should tell you — yet why should I conceal these trifles, or, indeed, anything from you? There is a book of mine will be published in a few days: the life of a very extraordinary man; no less than the great Voltaire. You know already by the title that it is no more than a catchpenny. However, I spent but four weeks on the whole performance, for which I received twenty pounds. When published, I shall take some method of conveying it to you, unless you may think it dear of the postage, which may amount to four or five shillings. However, I fear you will not find an equivalent of amusement.

"Your last letter, I repeat it, was too short; you should have given me your opinion of the design of the heroi-comical poem which I sent you. You remember I intended to introduce the hero of the poem as lying in a paltry ale-house.

[1] His sister, Mrs. Johnston; her marriage, like that of Mrs. Hodson, was private, but in pecuniary matters much less fortunate.

You may take the following specimen of the manner, which I flatter myself is quite original. The room in which he lies may be described somewhat in this way: —

"'The window, patched with paper, lent a ray
That feebly show'd the state in which he lay;
The sanded floor that grits beneath the tread,
The humid wall with paltry pictures spread;
The game of goose was there exposed to view,
And the twelve rules the royal martyr drew;
The Seasons, framed with listing, found a place,
And Prussia's monarch show'd his lamp-black face.
The morn was cold: he views with keen desire
A rusty grate unconscious of a fire;
An unpaid reckoning on the frieze was scored,
And five crack'd tea-cups dress'd the chimney-board.'

"And now imagine, after his soliloquy, the landlord to make his appearance in order to dun him for the reckoning: —

"'Not with that face, so servile and so gay,
That welcomes every stranger that can pay:
With sulky eye he smoked the patient man,
Then pull'd his breeches tight, and thus began,' &c.[1]

"All this is taken, you see, from nature. It is a good remark of Montaigne's, that the wisest men often have friends with whom they do not care how much they play the fool. Take my present follies as instances of my regard. Poetry is a much easier and more agreeable species of composition than prose; and, could a man live by it, it were not unpleasant employment to be a poet. I am resolved to leave no space, though I should fill it up only by telling you, what you very well know already, I mean that I am your most affectionate friend and brother,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

[1] The projected poem, of which the above were specimens, appears never to have been completed.

The "Life of Voltaire," alluded to in the latter part of the preceding letter, was the literary job undertaken to satisfy the demands of Griffiths. It was to have preceded a translation of the "Henriade," by Ned Purdon, Goldsmith's old schoolmate, now a Grub-Street writer, who starved rather than lived by the exercise of his pen, and often tasked Goldsmith's scanty means to relieve his hunger. His miserable career was summed up by our poet in the following lines written some years after the time we are treating of, on hearing that he had suddenly dropped dead in Smithfield: —

"Here lies poor Ned Purdon, from misery freed,
Who long was a bookseller's hack;
He led such a damnable life in this world,
I don't think he 'll wish to come back."

The memoir and translation, though advertised to form a volume, were not published together, but appeared separately in a magazine.

As to the heroi-comical poem, also, cited in the foregoing letter, it appears to have perished in embryo. Had it been brought to maturity, we should have had further traits of autobiography; the room already described was probably his own squalid quarters in Green Arbor Court; and in a subsequent morsel of the poem we have the poet himself, under the euphonious name of Scroggin: —

"Where the Red Lion peering o'er the way,
Invites each passing stranger that can pay;
Where Calvert's butt and Parson's black champaigne
Regale the drabs and bloods of Drury Lane:
There, in a lonely room, from bailiffs snug,
The muse found Scroggin stretch'd beneath a rug;
A nightcap deck'd his brows instead of bay,
A cap by night, a stocking all the day!"

It is to be regretted that this poetical conception was not carried out; like the author's other writings, it might have abounded with pictures of life and touches of nature drawn from his own observation and experience, and mellowed by his own humane and tolerant spirit; and might have been a worthy companion or rather contrast to his "Traveller" and "Deserted Village," and have remained in the language a first-rate specimen of the mock-heroic.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Comment on the aptness of Goldsmith's direction to his brother Henry about how to write a letter. What are the essentials of good letter writing to a friend? What are the fundamentals of good business letters?

2. Compare the amount of time Goldsmith spent on his "Life of Voltaire" with the time Irving spent in preparing his "Life of Goldsmith."

3. Goldsmith says that poetry is an easier species of composition than prose. Do you find this to be true? Put in verse form a picture of Goldsmith at this period.

4. Irving suggests that Goldsmith was doomed to disappointment. Why should this be true? What do you conjecture will be some of his further disappointments in life?

5. Why was Goldsmith rejected by the College of Surgeons?

6. Incidents in Goldsmith's life at his forlorn quarters in Green Arbor Court. Describe Green Arbor Court as seen by Irving.

7. What is meant by the mock-heroic? Write a mock-heroic account of the rejection of Goldsmith by the surgeons. [Introduce conversation.]

CHAPTER XI

Publication of "The Inquiry" — Attack by Griffiths' Review — Kenrick the Literary Ishmaelite — Periodical Literature — Goldsmith's Essays — Garrick as a Manager — Smollett and his Schemes — Change of Lodgings — The Robin Hood Club.

Towards the end of March, 1759, the treatise on which Goldsmith had laid so much stress, on which he at one time had calculated to defray the expenses of his outfit to India, and to which he had adverted in his correspondence with Griffiths, made its appearance. It was published by the Dodsleys, and entitled "An Inquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe."

In the present day, when the whole field of contemporary literature is so widely surveyed and amply discussed, and when the current productions of every country are constantly collated and ably criticised, a treatise like that of Goldsmith would be considered as extremely limited and unsatisfactory; but at that time it possessed novelty in its views and wideness in its scope, and being indued with the peculiar charm of style inseparable from the author, it commanded public attention and a profitable sale. As it was the most important production that had yet come from Goldsmith's pen, he was anxious to have the credit of it; yet it appeared without his name on the title-page. The authorship, however, was well known throughout the world of letters, and the author had now grown into sufficient literary importance to become an object of hostility to the underlings of the press. One of the most virulent attacks upon him was in a criticism on this treatise, and appeared in the "Monthly Review" to which he himself had been

recently a contributor. It slandered him as a man while it decried him as an author, and accused him, by innuendo, of "laboring under the infamy of having, by the vilest and meanest actions, forfeited all pretensions to honor and honesty," and of practising "those acts which bring the sharper to the cart's tail or the pillory."

It will be remembered that the Review was owned by Griffiths the bookseller, with whom Goldsmith had recently had a misunderstanding. The criticism, therefore, was no doubt dictated by the lingerings of resentment; and the imputations upon Goldsmith's character for honor and honesty, and the vile and mean actions hinted at, could only allude to the unfortunate pawning of the clothes. All this, too, was after Griffiths had received the affecting letter from Goldsmith, drawing a picture of his poverty and perplexities, and after the latter had made him a literary compensation. Griffiths, in fact, was sensible of the falsehood and extravagance of the attack, and tried to exonerate himself by declaring that the criticism was written by a person in his employ; but we see no difference in atrocity between him who wields the knife and him who hires the cut-throat. It may be well, however, in passing, to bestow our mite of notoriety upon the miscreant who launched the slander. He deserves it for a long course of dastardly and venomous attacks, not merely upon Goldsmith, but upon most of the successful authors of the day. His name was Kenrick. He was originally a mechanic, but, possessing some degree of talent and industry, applied himself to literature as a profession. This he pursued for many years, and tried his hand in every department of prose and poetry; he wrote plays and satires, philosophical tracts, critical dissertations, and works on philology; nothing from his pen ever rose to first-rate excellence, or gained him a popular name, though he received from some university the degree of Doctor of Laws. Dr. Johnson

characterized his literary career in one short sentence. "Sir, he is one of the many who have made themselves *public* without making themselves *known*."

Soured by his own want of success, jealous of the success of others, his natural irritability of temper increased by habits of intemperance, he at length abandoned himself to the practice of reviewing, and became one of the Ishmaelites of the press. In this his malignant bitterness soon gave him a notoriety which his talents had never been able to attain. We shall dismiss him for the present with the following sketch of him by the hand of one of his contemporaries: —

> "Dreaming of genius which he never had,
> Half wit, half fool, half critic, and half mad;
> Seizing, like Shirley, on the poet's lyre,
> With all his rage, but not one spark of fire;
> Eager for slaughter, and resolved to tear
> From other's brows that wreath he must not wear —
> Next Kenrick came: all furious and replete
> With brandy, malice, pertness, and conceit;
> Unskill'd in classic lore, through envy blind
> To all that 's beauteous, learned, or refined;
> For faults alone behold the savage prowl,
> With reason's offal glut his ravening soul;
> Pleased with his prey, its inmost blood he drinks,
> And mumbles, paws, and turns it — till it stinks."

The British press about this time was extravagantly fruitful of periodical publications. That "oldest inhabitant," the "Gentleman's Magazine," almost coeval with St. John's gate which graced its title-page, had long been elbowed by magazines and reviews of all kinds: Johnson's "Rambler" had introduced the fashion of periodical essays, which he had followed up in his "Adventurer" and "Idler." Imitations had sprung up on every side, under every variety of name; until British literature was entirely overrun by a weedy and transient efflorescence. Many of these rival

periodicals choked each other almost at the outset, and few of them have escaped oblivion.

Goldsmith wrote for some of the most successful, such as the "Bee," the "Busy-Body," and the "Lady's Magazine." His essays, though characterized by his delightful style, his pure, benevolent morality, and his mellow, unobtrusive humor, did not produce equal effect at first with more garish writings of infinitely less value; they did not "strike," as it is termed; but they had that rare and enduring merit which rises in estimation on every perusal. They gradually stole upon the heart of the public, were copied into numerous contemporary publications, and now they are garnered up among the choice productions of British literature.

In his "Inquiry into the State of Polite Learning," Goldsmith had given offence to David Garrick, at that time autocrat of the Drama, and was doomed to experience its effect. A clamor had been raised against Garrick for exercising a despotism over the stage, and bringing forward nothing but old plays to the exclusion of original productions. Walpole joined in this charge. "Garrick," said he, "is treating the town as it deserves and likes to be treated, — with scenes, fire-works, and *his own writings*. A good new play I never expect to see more; nor have seen since the 'Provoked Husband,' which came out when I was at school." Goldsmith, who was extremely fond of the theatre, and felt the evils of this system, inveighed in his treatise against the wrongs experienced by authors at the hands of managers. "Our poet's performance," said he, "must undergo a process truly chemical before it is presented to the public. It must be tried in the manager's fire; strained through a licenser, suffer from repeated corrections, till it may be a mere *caput mortuum* when it arrives before the public." Again, — "Getting a play on even in three or four years is a privilege reserved only for the happy few who have the arts of courting

the manager as well as the Muse; who have adulation to please his vanity, powerful patrons to support their merit, or money to indemnify disappointment. Our Saxon ancestors had but one name for a wit and a witch. I will not dispute the propriety of uniting those characters then; but the man who under present discouragements ventures to write for the stage, whatever claim he may have to the appellation of a wit, at least has no right to be called a conjurer." But a passage which perhaps touched more sensibly than all the rest on the sensibilities of Garrick, was the following:—

"I have no particular spleen against the fellow who sweeps the stage with the besom, or the hero who brushes it with his train. It were a matter of indifference to me, whether our heroines are in keeping, or our candle-snuffers burn their fingers, did not such make a great part of public care and polite conversation. Our actors assume all that state off the stage which they do on it; and, to use an expression borrowed from the green-room, every one is *up* in his part. I am sorry to say it, they seem to forget their real characters."

These strictures were considered by Garrick as intended for himself, and they were rankling in his mind when Goldsmith waited upon him and solicited his vote for the vacant secretaryship of the Society of Arts, of which the manager was a member. Garrick, puffed up by his dramatic renown and his intimacy with the great, and knowing Goldsmith only by his budding reputation, may not have considered him of sufficient importance to be conciliated. In reply to his solicitations, he observed that he could hardly expect his friendly exertions after the unprovoked attack he had made upon his management. Goldsmith replied that he had indulged in no personalities, and had only spoken what he believed to be the truth. He made no further apology nor application; failed to get the appointment, and considered

Garrick his enemy. In the second edition of his treatise he expunged or modified the passages which had given the manager offence; but though the author and actor became intimate in after-years, this false step at the outset of their intercourse was never forgotten.

About this time Goldsmith engaged with Dr. Smollett, who was about to launch the "British Magazine." Smollett was a complete schemer and speculator in literature, and intent upon enterprises that had money rather than reputation in view. Goldsmith has a good-humored hit at this propensity in one of his papers in the "Bee," in which he represents Johnson, Hume, and others taking seats in the stage-coach bound for Fame, while Smollett prefers that destined for Riches.

Another prominent employer of Goldsmith was Mr. John Newbery, who engaged him to contribute occasional essays to a newspaper entitled the "Public Ledger," which made its first appearance on the 12th of January, 1760. His most valuable and characteristic contributions to this paper were his "Chinese Letters," subsequently modified into the "Citizen of the World." These lucubrations attracted general attention; they were reprinted in the various periodical publications of the day, and met with great applause. The name of the author, however, was as yet but little known.

Being now easier in circumstances, and in the receipt of frequent sums from the booksellers, Goldsmith, about the middle of 1760, emerged from his dismal abode in Green Arbor Court, and took respectable apartments in Wine-Office Court, Fleet Street.

Still he continued to look back with considerate benevolence to the poor hostess, whose necessities he had relieved by pawning his gala coat, for we are told that "he often supplied her with food from his own table, and visited her frequently with the sole purpose to be kind to her."

He now became a member of a debating club, called the Robin Hood, which used to meet near Temple Bar, and in which Burke, while yet a Temple student, had first tried his powers. Goldsmith spoke here occasionally, and is recorded in the Robin Hood archives as "a candid disputant, with a clear head and an honest heart, though coming but seldom to the society." His relish was for clubs of a more social, jovial nature, and he was never fond of argument. An amusing anecdote is told of his first introduction to the club, by Samuel Derrick, an Irish acquaintance of some humor. On entering, Goldsmith was struck with the self-important appearance of the chairman ensconced in a large gilt chair. "This," said he, "must be the Lord Chancellor at least." "No, no," replied Derrick, "he 's only master of the *rolls*." — The chairman was a *baker*.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the elements that make Goldsmith's "peculiar charm of style"? Does Irving show any charm of style in this biography?

2. What made it possible for Goldsmith to move to Fleet Street?

3. Is the pun at the end of the chapter a good one? [Compare third question, Chapter XLIV.]

4. By what means was Goldsmith introduced to the Robin Hood debating club?

5. What should be the aim of a debating club? What can be accomplished by such an organization? Draw up constitution and by-laws for what you would consider an ideal debating club.

CHAPTER XII

New Lodgings — Visits of Ceremony — Hangers-on — Pilkington and the White Mouse — Introduction to Dr. Johnson — Davies and his Bookshop — Pretty Mrs. Davies — Foote and his Projects — Criticism of the Cudgel.

In his new lodgings in Wine-Office Court, Goldsmith began to receive visits of ceremony, and to entertain his literary friends. Among the latter he now numbered several names of note, such as Guthrie, Murphy, Christopher Smart, and Bickerstaff. He had also a numerous class of hangers-on, the small fry of literature; who, knowing his almost utter incapacity to refuse a pecuniary request, were apt, now that he was considered flush, to levy continual taxes upon his purse.

Among others, one Pilkington, an old college acquaintance, but now a shifting adventurer, duped him in the most ludicrous manner. He called on him with a face full of perplexity. A lady of the first rank having an extraordinary fancy for curious animals, for which she was willing to give enormous sums, he had procured a couple of white mice to be forwarded to her from India. They were actually on board of a ship in the river. Her grace had been apprised of their arrival, and was all impatience to see them. Unfortunately, he had no cage to put them in, nor clothes to appear in before a lady of her rank. Two guineas would be sufficient for his purpose, but where were two guineas to be procured!

The simple heart of Goldsmith was touched; but, alas! he had but half a guinea in his pocket. It was unfortunate, but, after a pause, his friend suggested, with some hesitation, "that money might be raised upon his watch: it

would but be the loan of a few hours." So said, so done; the watch was delivered to the worthy Mr. Pilkington to be pledged at a neighboring pawnbroker's, but nothing farther was ever seen of him, the watch, or the white mice. The next that Goldsmith heard of the poor shifting scapegrace, he was on his death-bed, starving with want, upon which, forgetting or forgiving the trick he had played upon him, he sent him a guinea. Indeed he used often to relate with great humor the foregoing anecdote of his credulity, and was ultimately in some degree indemnified by its suggesting to him the amusing little story of Prince Bonbennin and the White Mouse in the "Citizen of the World."

In this year Goldsmith became personally acquainted with Dr. Johnson, toward whom he was drawn by strong sympathies, though their natures were widely different. Both had struggled from early life with poverty, but had struggled in different ways. Goldsmith, buoyant, heedless, sanguine, tolerant of evils, and easily pleased, had shifted along by any temporary expedient; cast down at every turn, but rising again with indomitable good-humor, and still carried forward by his talent at hoping. Johnson, melancholy, and hypochondriacal, and prone to apprehend the worst, yet sternly resolute to battle with and conquer it, had made his way doggedly and gloomily, but with a noble principle of self-reliance and a disregard of foreign aid. Both had been irregular at college: Goldsmith, as we have shown, from the levity of his nature and his social and convivial habits; Johnson, from his acerbity and gloom. When, in after-life, the latter heard himself spoken of as gay and frolicsome at college, because he had joined in some riotous excesses there, "Ah, sir!" replied he, "I was mad and violent. It was bitterness which they mistook for frolic. *I was miserably poor, and I thought to fight my way by my literature and my wit.* So I disregarded all power and all authority."

Goldsmith's poverty was never accompanied by bitterness; but neither was it accompanied by the guardian pride which kept Johnson from falling into the degrading shifts of poverty. Goldsmith had an unfortunate facility at borrowing, and helping himself along by the contributions of his friends; no doubt trusting in his hopeful way, of one day making retribution. Johnson never hoped, and therefore never borrowed. In his sternest trials he proudly bore the ills he could not master. In his youth, when some unknown friend, seeing his shoes completely worn out, left a new pair at his chamber-door, he disdained to accept the boon, and threw them away.

Though like Goldsmith an immethodical student, he had imbibed deeper draughts of knowledge, and made himself a riper scholar. While Goldsmith's happy constitution and genial humors carried him abroad into sunshine and enjoyment, Johnson's physical infirmities and mental gloom drove him upon himself; to the resources of reading and meditation; threw a deeper though darker enthusiasm into his mind, and stored a retentive memory with all kinds of knowledge.

After several years of youth passed in the country as usher, teacher, and an occasional writer for the press, Johnson, when twenty-eight years of age, came up to London with a half-written tragedy in his pocket; and David Garrick, late his pupil, and several years his junior, as a companion, both poor and penniless, — both, like Goldsmith, seeking their fortune in the metropolis. "We rode and tied," said Garrick sportively in after-years of prosperity, when he spoke of their humble wayfaring. "I came to London," said Johnson, "with twopence halfpenny in my pocket." — "Eh, what 's that you say?" cried Garrick, "with twopence halfpenny in your pocket?" "Why, yes: I came with twopence halfpenny in *my* pocket, and thou, Davy, with but three halfpence in thine." Nor was there much exaggeration in the picture;

for so poor were they in purse and credit, that after their arrival they had, with difficulty, raised five pounds, by giving their joint note to a bookseller in the Strand.

Many, many years had Johnson gone on obscurely in London, "fighting his way by his literature and his wit"; enduring all the hardships and miseries of a Grub-Street writer: so destitute at one time, that he and Savage the poet had walked all night about St. James's Square, both too poor to pay for a night's lodging, yet both full of poetry and patriotism, and determined to stand by their country; so shabby in dress at another time, that, when he dined at Cave's, his bookseller, when there was prosperous company, he could not make his appearance at table, but had his dinner handed to him behind a screen.

Yet through all the long and dreary struggle, often diseased in mind as well as in body, he had been resolutely self-dependent, and proudly self-respectful; he had fulfilled his college vow, he had "fought his way by his literature and wit." His "Rambler" and "Idler" had made him the great moralist of the age, and his "Dictionary and History of the English Language," that stupendous monument of individual labor, had excited the admiration of the learned world. He was now at the head of intellectual society; and had become as distinguished by his conversational as his literary powers. He had become as much an autocrat in his sphere as his fellow-wayfarer and adventurer Garrick had become of the stage, and had been humorously dubbed by Smollett, "The Great Cham of Literature."

Such was Dr. Johnson, when on the 31st of May, 1761, he was to make his appearance as a guest at a literary supper given by Goldsmith to a numerous party at his new lodgings in Wine-Office Court. It was the opening of their acquaintance. Johnson had felt and acknowledged the merit of Goldsmith as an author, and been pleased by the honorable

mention made of himself in the "Bee" and the "Chinese Letters." Dr. Percy called upon Johnson to take him to Goldsmith's lodgings; he found Johnson arrayed with unusual care in a new suit of clothes, a new hat, and a well-powdered wig; and could not but notice his uncommon spruceness. "Why, sir," replied Johnson, "I hear that Goldsmith, who is a very great sloven, justifies his disregard of cleanliness and decency by quoting my practice, and I am desirous this night to show him a better example."

The acquaintance thus commenced ripened into intimacy in the course of frequent meetings at the shop of Davies, the bookseller, in Russell Street, Covent Garden. As this was one of the great literary gossiping-places of the day, especially to the circle over which Johnson presided, it is worthy of some specification. Mr. Thomas Davies, noted in after-times as the biographer of Garrick, had originally been on the stage, and though a small man, had enacted tyrannical tragedy with a pomp and magniloquence beyond his size, if we may trust the description given of him by Churchill in the "Rosciad": —

> "Statesman all over — in plots famous grown,
> *He mouths a sentence as curs mouth a bone.*"

This unlucky sentence is said to have crippled him in the midst of his tragic career, and ultimately to have driven him from the stage. He carried into the bookselling craft somewhat of the grandiose manner of the stage, and was prone to be mouthy and magniloquent.

Churchill had intimated, that while on the stage he was more noted for his pretty wife than his good acting: —

> "With him came mighty Davies; on my life,
> That fellow has a very pretty wife."

"Pretty Mrs. Davies" continued to be the loadstar of his fortunes. Her tea-table became almost as much a literary

lounge as her husband's shop. She found favor in the eyes of the Ursa Major of literature by her winning ways, as she poured out for him cups without stint of his favorite beverage. Indeed it is suggested that she was one leading cause of his habitual resort to this literary haunt. Others were drawn thither for the sake of Johnson's conversation, and thus it became a resort of many of the notorieties of the day. Here might occasionally be seen Bennet Langton, George Steevens, Dr. Percy, celebrated for his ancient ballads, and sometimes Warburton in prelatic state. Garrick resorted to it for a time, but soon grew shy and suspicious, declaring that most of the authors who frequented Mr. Davies's shop went merely to abuse him.

Foote, the Aristophanes of the day, was a frequent visitor; his broad face beaming with fun and waggery, and his satirical eye ever on the lookout for characters and incidents for his farces. He was struck with the odd habits and appearance of Johnson and Goldsmith, now so often brought together in Davies's shop. He was about to put on the stage a farce called "The Orators," intended as a hit at the Robin Hood debating-club, and resolved to show up the two doctors in it for the entertainment of the town.

"What is the common price of an oak stick, sir?" said Johnson to Davies. "Sixpence," was the reply. "Why then, sir, give me leave to send your servant to purchase a shilling one. I'll have a double quantity, for I am told Foote means to take me off as he calls it, and I am determined the fellow shall not do it with impunity."

Foote had no disposition to undergo the criticism of the cudgel wielded by such potent hands, so the farce of "The Orators" appeared without the caricatures of the lexicographer and the essayist.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Comparison of the struggles of Goldsmith and Johnson for literary recognition.

2. Who were some of Goldsmith's intimates in these years? How many of them might reasonably be called famous? Does the company Goldsmith kept indicate the kind of man he was?

3. A study of the allusions to Goldsmith in Boswell's "Life of Johnson." [Consult index of the Boswell.]

CHAPTER XIII

Oriental Projects — Literary Jobs — The Cherokee Chiefs — Merry Islington and the White Conduit House — Letters on the History of England — James Boswell — Dinner of Davies — Anecdotes of Johnson and Goldsmith.

Notwithstanding his growing success, Goldsmith continued to consider literature a mere makeshift, and his vagrant imagination teemed with schemes and plans of a grand but indefinite nature. One was for visiting the East and exploring the interior of Asia. He had, as has been before observed, a vague notion that valuable discoveries were to be made there, and many useful inventions in the arts brought back to the stock of European knowledge. "Thus, in Siberian Tartary," observes he, in one of his writings, "the natives extract a strong spirit from milk, which is a secret probably unknown to the chemists of Europe. In the most savage parts of India they are possessed of the secret of dyeing vegetable substances scarlet, and that of refining lead into a metal which, for hardness and color, is little inferior to silver."

Goldsmith adds a description of the kind of person suited to such an enterprise, in which he evidently had himself in view.

"He should be a man of philosophical turn, one apt to deduce consequences of general utility from particular occurrences; neither swoln with pride, nor hardened by prejudice; neither wedded to one particular system, nor instructed only in one particular science; neither wholly a botanist, nor quite an antiquarian; his mind should be tinctured with miscellaneous knowledge, and his manners humanized by an intercourse with men. He should be in some measure an enthusiast to the design; fond of travelling, from a rapid

imagination, and an innate love of change; furnished with a body capable of sustaining every fatigue, and a heart not easily terrified at danger."

In 1761, when Lord Bute became prime minister on the accession of George the Third, Goldsmith drew up a memorial on the subject, suggesting the advantages to be derived from a mission to those countries solely for useful and scientific purposes; and, the better to insure success, he preceded his application to the government by an ingenious essay to the same effect in the "Public Ledger."

His memorial and his essay were fruitless, his project most probably being deemed the dream of a visionary. Still it continued to haunt his mind, and he would often talk of making an expedition to Aleppo some time or other, when his means were greater, to inquire into the arts peculiar to the East, and to bring home such as might be valuable. Johnson, who knew how little poor Goldsmith was fitted by scientific lore for this favorite scheme of his fancy, scoffed at the project when it was mentioned to him. "Of all men," said he, "Goldsmith is the most unfit to go out upon such an inquiry, for he is utterly ignorant of such arts as we already possess, and, consequently, could not know what would be accessions to our present stock of mechanical knowledge. Sir, he would bring home a grinding-barrow, which you see in every street in London, and think that he had furnished a wonderful improvement."

His connection with Newbery the bookseller now led him into a variety of temporary jobs, such as a pamphlet on the Cock-Lane Ghost, a Life of Beau Nash, the famous Master of Ceremonies at Bath, &c.: one of the best things for his fame, however, was the remodelling and republication of his Chinese Letters under the title of "The Citizen of the World," a work which has long since taken its merited stand among the classics of the English language. "Few works," it has

been observed by one of his biographers, "exhibit a nicer perception, or more delicate delineation of life and manners. Wit, humor, and sentiment pervade every page; the vices and follies of the day are touched with the most playful and diverting satire; and English characteristics, in endless variety, are hit off with the pencil of a master."

In seeking materials for his varied views of life, he often mingled in strange scenes and got involved in whimsical situations. In the summer of 1762 he was one of the thousands who went to see the Cherokee chiefs, whom he mentions in one of his writings. The Indians made their appearance in grand costume, hideously painted and besmeared. In the course of the visit Goldsmith made one of the chiefs a present, who, in the ecstasy of his gratitude, gave him an embrace that left his face well bedaubed with oil and red ochre.

Towards the close of 1762 he removed to "merry Islington," then a country village, though now swallowed up in omnivorous London. He went there for the benefit of country air, his health being injured by literary application and confinement, and to be near his chief employer, Mr. Newbery, who resided in the Canonbury House. In this neighborhood he used to take his solitary rambles, sometimes extending his walks to the gardens of the "White Conduit House," so famous among the essayists of the last century. While strolling one day in these gardens, he met three females of the family of a respectable tradesman to whom he was under some obligation. With his prompt disposition to oblige, he conducted them about the garden, treated them to tea, and ran up a bill in the most open-handed manner imaginable; it was only when he came to pay that he found himself in one of his old dilemmas — he had not the wherewithal in his pocket. A scene of perplexity now took place between him and the waiter, in the midst of which came up some of his acquaintances, in whose

eyes he wished to stand particularly well. This completed his mortification. There was no concealing the awkwardness of his position. The sneers of the waiter revealed it. His acquaintances amused themselves for some time at his expense, professing their inability to relieve him. When, however, they had enjoyed their banter, the waiter was paid, and poor Goldsmith enabled to convoy off the ladies with flying colors.

Among the various productions thrown off by him for the booksellers during this growing period of his reputation, was a small work in two volumes, entitled "The History of England, in a Series of Letters from a Nobleman to his Son." It was digested from Hume, Rapin, Carte, and Kennet. These authors he would read in the morning; make a few notes; ramble with a friend into the country about the skirts of "merry Islington"; return to a temperate dinner and cheerful evening; and, before going to bed, write off what had arranged itself in his head from the studies of the morning. In this way he took a more general view of the subject, and wrote in a more free and fluent style than if he had been mousing at the time among authorities. The work, like many others written by him in the earlier part of his literary career, was anonymous. Some attributed it to Lord Chesterfield, others to Lord Orrery, and others to Lord Lyttelton. The latter seemed pleased to be the putative father, and never disowned the bantling thus laid at his door; and well might he have been proud to be considered capable of producing what has been well-pronounced "the most finished and elegant summary of English history in the same compass that has been or is likely to be written."

The reputation of Goldsmith, it will be perceived, grew slowly; he was known and estimated by a few; but he had not those brilliant though fallacious qualities which flash

upon the public, and excite loud but transient applause. His works were more read than cited; and the charm of style, for which he was especially noted, was more apt to be felt than talked about. He used often to repine, in a half humorous, half querulous manner, at his tardiness in gaining the laurels which he felt to be his due. "The public," he would exclaim, "will never do me justice; whenever I write anything, they make a point to know nothing about it."

About the beginning of 1763 he became acquainted with Boswell, whose literary gossipings were destined to have a deleterious effect upon his reputation. Boswell was at that time a young man, light, buoyant, pushing, and presumptuous. He had a morbid passion for mingling in the society of men noted for wit and learning, and had just arrived from Scotland, bent upon making his way into the literary circles of the metropolis. An intimacy with Dr. Johnson, the great literary luminary of the day, was the crowning object of his aspiring and somewhat ludicrous ambition. He expected to meet him at a dinner to which he was invited at Davies the bookseller's but was disappointed. Goldsmith was present, but he was not as yet sufficiently renowned to excite the reverence of Boswell. "At this time," says he in his notes, "I think he had published nothing with his name, though it was pretty generally understood that one Dr. Goldsmith was the author of 'An Inquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe,' and of 'The Citizen of the World,' a series of letters supposed to be written from London, by a Chinese."

A conversation took place at table between Goldsmith and Mr. Robert Dodsley, compiler of the well-known collection of modern poetry, as to the merits of the current poetry of the day. Goldsmith declared there was none of superior merit. Dodsley cited his own collection in proof

of the contrary. "It is true," said he, "we can boast of no palaces nowadays, like Dryden's 'Ode to St. Cecilia's Day,' but we have villages composed of very pretty houses." Goldsmith, however, maintained that there was nothing above mediocrity, an opinion in which Johnson, to whom it was repeated, concurred, and with reason, for the era was one of the dead levels of British poetry.

Boswell has made no note of this conversation; he was an unitarian in his literary devotion, and disposed to worship none but Johnson. Little Davies endeavored to console him for his disappointment, and to stay the stomach of his curiosity, by giving him imitations of the great lexicographer; mouthing his words, rolling his head, and assuming as ponderous a manner as his petty person would permit. Boswell was shortly afterwards made happy by an introduction to Johnson, of whom he became the obsequious satellite. From him he likewise imbibed a more favorable opinion of Goldsmith's merits, though he was fain to consider them derived in a great measure from his Magnus Apollo. "He had sagacity enough," says he, "to cultivate assiduously the acquaintance of Johnson, and his faculties were gradually enlarged by the contemplation of such a model. To me and many others it appeared that he studiously copied the manner of Johnson, though, indeed, upon a smaller scale." So on another occasion he calls him "one of the brightest ornaments of the Johnsonian school." "His respectful attachment to Johnson," adds he, "was then at its height; for his own literary reputation had not yet distinguished him so much as to excite a vain desire of competition with his great master."

What beautiful instances does the garrulous Boswell give of the goodness of heart of Johnson, and the passing homage to it by Goldsmith. They were speaking of a Mr. Levett, long an inmate of Johnson's house and a dependent on his

bounty; but who, Boswell thought, must be an irksome charge upon him. "He is poor and honest," said Goldsmith, "which is recommendation enough to Johnson."

Boswell mentioned another person of a very bad character, and wondered at Johnson's kindness to him. "He is now become miserable," said Goldsmith, "and that insures the protection of Johnson." Encomiums like these speak almost as much for the heart of him who praises as of him who is praised.

Subsequently, when Boswell had become more intense in his literary idolatry, he affected to undervalue Goldsmith, and a lurking hostility to him is discernible throughout his writings, which some have attributed to a silly spirit of jealousy of the superior esteem evinced for the poet by Dr. Johnson. We have a gleam of this in his account of the first evening he spent in company with those two eminent authors at their famous resort, the Mitre Tavern, in Fleet Street. This took place on the 1st of July, 1763. The trio supped together, and passed some time in literary conversation. On quitting the tavern, Johnson, who had now been sociably acquainted with Goldsmith for two years, and knew his merits, took him with him to drink tea with his blind pensioner, Miss Williams, — a high privilege among his intimates and admirers. To Boswell, a recent acquaintance, whose intrusive sycophancy had not yet made its way into his confidential intimacy, he gave no invitation. Boswell felt it with all the jealousy of a little mind. "Dr. Goldsmith," says he, in his memoirs, "being a privileged man went with him, strutting away, and calling to me with an air of superiority, like that of an esoteric over an exoteric disciple of a sage of antiquity, 'I go to Miss Williams.' I confess I then envied him this mighty privilege, of which he seemed to be so proud; but it was not long before I obtained the same mark of distinction."

Obtained! but how? not like Goldsmith, by the force of unpretending but congenial merit, but by a course of the most pushing, contriving, and spaniel-like subserviency. Really, the ambition of the man to illustrate his mental insignificance, by continually placing himself in juxtaposition with the great lexicographer, has something in it perfectly ludicrous. Never, since the days of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, has there been presented to the world a more whimsically contrasted pair of associates than Johnson and Boswell.

"Who is this Scotch cur at Johnson's heels?" asked some one when Boswell had worked his way into incessant companionship. "He is not a cur," replied Goldsmith, "you are too severe; he is only a bur. Tom Davies flung him at Johnson in sport, and he has the faculty of sticking."

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Show how Goldsmith's method of writing his "History of England" should offer hints to you in the preparation of school compositions.

2. What well-known short poem of Goldsmith's contains a reference to Islington? [See Chapter XVII of "The Vicar of Wakefield."]

3. Who was Boswell? Why should not he and Goldsmith have found each other's company agreeable?

4. Why might Johnson be called the Magnus Apollo of Boswell? By what other terms is Johnson referred to in Irving's "Life of Goldsmith"?

CHAPTER XIV

Hogarth a Visitor at Islington; His Character — Street Studies — Sympathies between Authors and Painters — Sir Joshua Reynolds; His Character; His Dinners — The Literary Club; Its Members — Johnson's Revels with Lankey and Beau — Goldsmith at the Club.

Among the intimates who used to visit the poet occasionally in his retreat at Islington, was Hogarth the painter. Goldsmith had spoken well of him in his essays in the "Public Ledger," and this formed the first link in their friendship. He was at this time upwards of sixty years of age, and is described as a stout, active, bustling little man, in a sky-blue coat, satirical and dogmatic, yet full of real benevolence and the love of human nature. He was the moralist and philosopher of the pencil; like Goldsmith he had sounded the depths of vice and misery, without being polluted by them; and though his picturings had not the pervading amenity of those of the essayist, and dwelt more on the crimes and vices than the follies and humors of mankind, yet they were all calculated, in like manner, to fill the mind with instruction and precept, and to make the heart better.

Hogarth does not appear to have had much of the rural feeling with which Goldsmith was so amply endowed, and may not have accompanied him in his strolls about hedges and green lanes; but he was a fit companion with whom to explore the mazes of London, in which he was continually on the lookout for character and incident. One of Hogarth's admirers speaks of having come upon him in Castle Street, engaged in one of his street-studies, watching two boys who were quarrelling; patting one on the back who flinched,

and endeavoring to spirit him up to a fresh encounter. "At him again! D— him, if I would take it of him! At him again!"

A frail memorial of this intimacy between the painter and the poet exists in a portrait in oil, called "Goldsmith's Hostess." It is supposed to have been painted by Hogarth in the course of his visits to Islington, and given by him to the poet as a means of paying his landlady. There are no friendships among men of talents more likely to be sincere than those between painters and poets. Possessed of the same qualities of mind, governed by the same principles of taste and natural laws of grace and beauty, but applying them to different yet mutually illustrative arts, they are constantly in sympathy, and never in collision with each other.

A still more congenial intimacy of the kind was that contracted by Goldsmith with Mr. (afterwards Sir Joshua) Reynolds. The latter was now about forty years of age, a few years older than the poet, whom he charmed by the blandness and benignity of his manners, and the nobleness and generosity of his disposition, as much as he did by the graces of his pencil and the magic of his coloring. They were men of kindred genius, excelling in corresponding qualities of their several arts, for style in writing is what color is in painting; both are innate endowments, and equally magical in their effects. Certain graces and harmonies of both may be acquired by diligent study and imitation, but only in a limited degree; whereas by their natural possessors they are exercised spontaneously, almost unconsciously, and with ever-varying fascination. Reynolds soon understood and appreciated the merits of Goldsmith, and a sincere and lasting friendship ensued between them.

At Reynolds's house Goldsmith mingled in a higher range of company than he had been accustomed to. The fame of this celebrated artist, and his amenity of manners, were

gathering round him men of talents of all kinds, and the increasing affluence of his circumstances enabled him to give full indulgence to his hospitable disposition. Poor Goldsmith had not yet, like Dr. Johnson, acquired reputation enough to atone for his external defects and his want of the air of good society. Miss Reynolds used to inveigh against his personal appearance, which gave her the idea, she said, of a low mechanic, a journeyman tailor. One evening at a large supper-party, being called upon to give as a toast the ugliest man she knew, she gave Dr. Goldsmith, upon which a lady who sat opposite, and whom she had never met before, shook hands with her across the table, and "hoped to become better acquainted."

We have a graphic and amusing picture of Reynolds's hospitable but motley establishment, in an account given by a Mr. Courtenay to Sir James Mackintosh; though it speaks of a time after Reynolds had received the honor of knighthood. "There was something singular," said he, "in the style and economy of Sir Joshua's table that contributed to pleasantry and good-humor, — a coarse, inelegant plenty, without any regard to order and arrangement. At five o'clock precisely, dinner was served, whether all the invited guests had arrived or not. Sir Joshua was never so fashionably ill-bred as to wait an hour perhaps for two or three persons of rank or title, and put the rest of the company out of humor by this invidious distinction. His invitations, however, did not regulate the number of his guests. Many dropped in uninvited. A table prepared for seven or eight was often compelled to contain fifteen or sixteen. There was a consequent deficiency of knives, forks, plates, and glasses. The attendance was in the same style, and those who were knowing in the ways of the house took care on sitting down to call instantly for beer, bread, or wine, that they might secure a supply before the first course was over.

He was once prevailed on to furnish the table with decanters and glasses at dinner, to save time and prevent confusion. These gradually were demolished in the course of service, and were never replaced. These trifling embarrassments, however, only served to enhance the hilarity and singular pleasure of the entertainment. The wine, cookery, and dishes were but little attended to; nor was the fish or venison ever talked of or recommended. Amidst this convivial animated bustle among his guests, our host sat perfectly composed; always attentive to what was said, never minding what was ate or drank, but left every one at perfect liberty to scramble for himself."

Out of the casual but frequent meeting of men of talent at this hospitable board rose that association of wits, authors, scholars, and statesmen, renowned as the Literary Club. Reynolds was the first to propose a regular association of the kind, and was eagerly seconded by Johnson, who proposed as a model a club which he had formed many years previously in Ivy Lane, but which was now extinct. Like that club the number of members was limited to nine. They were to meet and sup together once a week, on Monday night, at the Turk's Head on Gerard Street, Soho, and two members were to constitute a meeting. It took a regular form in the year 1764, but did not receive its literary appellation until several years afterwards.

The original members were Reynolds, Johnson, Burke, Dr. Nugent, Bennet Langton, Topham Beauclerc, Chamier, Hawkins, and Goldsmith; and here a few words concerning some of the members may be acceptable. Burke was at that time about thirty-three years of age; he had mingled a little in politics and been Under-Secretary to Hamilton at Dublin, but was again a writer for the booksellers, and as yet but in the dawning of his fame. Dr. Nugent was his father-in-law, a Roman Catholic, and a physician of talent

and instruction. Mr. (afterwards Sir John) Hawkins was admitted into this association from having been a member of Johnson's Ivy-Lane club. Originally an attorney, he had retired from the practice of the law, in consequence of a large fortune which fell to him in right of his wife, and was now a Middlesex magistrate. He was, moreover, a dabbler in literature and music, and was actually engaged on a history of music, which he subsequently published in five ponderous volumes. To him we are also indebted for a biography of Johnson, which appeared after the death of that eminent man. Hawkins was as mean and parsimonious as he was pompous and conceited. He forbore to partake of the suppers at the club, and begged therefore to be excused from paying his share of the reckoning. "And was he excused?" asked Dr. Burney of Johnson. "Oh, yes, for no man is angry at another for being inferior to himself. We all scorned him and admitted his plea. Yet I really believe him to be an honest man at bottom, though to be sure he is penurious, and he is mean, and it must be owned he has a tendency to savageness." He did not remain above two or three years in the club; being in a manner elbowed out in consequence of his rudeness to Burke.

Mr. Anthony Chamier was Secretary in the war-office, and a friend of Beauclerc, by whom he was proposed. We have left our mention of Bennet Langton and Topham Beauclerc until the last, because we have most to say about them. They were doubtless induced to join the club through their devotion to Johnson, and the intimacy of these two very young and aristocratic young men with the stern and somewhat melancholy moralist is among the curiosities of literature.

Bennet Langton was of an ancient family, who held their ancestral estate of Langton in Lincolnshire, — a great title to respect with Johnson. "Langton, sir," he would say,

"has a grant of free-warren from Henry the Second; and Cardinal Stephen Langton, in King John's reign, was of this family."

Langton was of a mild, contemplative, enthusiastic nature. When but eighteen years of age he was so delighted with reading Johnson's "Rambler," that he came to London chiefly with a view to obtain an introduction to the author. Boswell gives us an account of his first interview, which took place in the morning. It is not often that the personal appearance of an author agrees with the preconceived ideas of his admirer. Langton, from perusing the writings of Johnson, expected to find him a decent, well-dressed, in short a remarkably decorous philosopher. Instead of which, down from his bedchamber about noon, came, as newly risen, a large uncouth figure, with a little dark wig which scarcely covered his head, and his clothes hanging loose about him. But his conversation was so rich, so animated, and so forcible, and his religious and political notions so congenial with those in which Langton had been educated, that he conceived for him that veneration and attachment which he ever preserved.

Langton went to pursue his studies at Trinity College, Oxford, where Johnson saw much of him during a visit which he paid to the University. He found him in close intimacy with Topham Beauclerc, a youth two years older than himself, very gay and dissipated, and wondered what sympathies could draw two young men together of such opposite characters. On becoming acquainted with Beauclerc he found that, rake though he was, he possessed an ardent love of literature, an acute understanding, polished wit, innate gentility, and high aristocratic breeding. He was, moreover, the only son of Lord Sidney Beauclerc and grandson of the Duke of St. Albans, and was thought in some particulars to have a resemblance to Charles the

Second. These were high recommendations with Johnson; and when the youth testified a profound respect for him and an ardent admiration of his talents, the conquest was complete, so that in a "short time," says Boswell, "the moral pious Johnson and the gay dissipated Beauclerc were companions."

The intimacy begun in college chambers was continued when the youths came to town during the vacations. The uncouth, unwieldy moralist was flattered at finding himself an object of idolatry to two high-born, high-bred, aristocratic young men, and throwing gravity aside, was ready to join in their vagaries and play the part of a "young man upon town." Such at least is the picture given of him by Boswell on one occasion when Beauclerc and Langton, having supped together at a tavern, determined to give Johnson a rouse at three o'clock in the morning. They accordingly rapped violently at the door of his chambers in the Temple. The indignant sage sallied forth in his shirt, poker in hand, and a little black wig on the top of his head, instead of helmet; prepared to wreak vengeance on the assailants of his castle; but when his two young friends *Lankey* and *Beau*, as he used to call them, presented themselves, summoning him forth to a morning ramble, his whole manner changed. "What, is it you, ye dogs?" cried he. "Faith I 'll have a frisk with you!"

So said so done. They sallied forth together into Covent-Garden; figured among the green-grocers and fruit-women, just come in from the country with their hampers; repaired to a neighboring tavern, where Johnson brewed a bowl of *bishop*, a favorite beverage with him, grew merry over his cups, and anathematized sleep in two lines, from Lord Lansdowne's drinking-song: —

> "Short, very short, be then thy reign,
> For I' m in haste to laugh and drink again."

They then took boat again, rowed to Billingsgate, and Johnson and Beauclerc determined, like "mad wags," to "keep it up" for the rest of the day. Langton, however, the most sober-minded of the three, pleaded an engagement to breakfast with some young ladies; whereupon the great moralist reproached him with "leaving his social friends to go and sit with a set of wretched *un-idea'd* girls."

This madcap freak of the great lexicographer made a sensation, as may well be supposed, among his intimates. "I heard of your frolic t'other night," said Garrick to him; "you'll be in the 'Chronicle.'" He uttered worse forebodings to others. "I shall have my old friend to bail out of the round-house," said he. Johnson, however, valued himself upon having thus enacted a chapter in the "Rake's Progress," and crowed over Garrick on the occasion. "*He* durst not do such a thing!" chuckled he; "his *wife* would not *let* him!"

When these two young men entered the club, Langton was about twenty-two, and Beauclerc about twenty-four years of age, and both were launched on London life. Langton, however, was still the mild, enthusiastic scholar, steeped to the lips in Greek, with fine conversational powers, and an invaluable talent for listening. He was upwards of six feet high, and very spare. "Oh! that we could sketch him," exclaims Miss Hawkins, in her "Memoirs," "with his mild countenance, his elegant features, and his sweet smile, sitting with one leg twisted round the other, as if fearing to occupy more space than was equitable; his person inclining forward, as if wanting strength to support his weight, and his arms crossed over his bosom, or his hands locked together on his knee." Beauclerc, on such occasions, sportively compared him to a stork in Raphael's Cartoons, standing on one leg. Beauclerc was more a "man upon town," a lounger in St. James's Street, an associate with George Selwyn, with

Walpole, and other aristocratic wits; a man of fashion at court; a casual frequenter of the gaming-table; yet, with all this, he alternated in the easiest and happiest manner the scholar and the man of letters; lounged into the club with the most perfect self-possession, bringing with him the careless grace and polished wit of high-bred society, but making himself cordially at home among his learned fellow-members.

The gay yet lettered rake maintained his sway over Johnson, who was fascinated by that air of the world, that ineffable tone of good society in which he felt himself deficient, especially as the possessor of it always paid homage to his superior talent. "Beauclerc," he would say, using a quotation from Pope, "has a love of folly, but a scorn of fools; everything he does shows the one, and everything he says, the other." Beauclerc delighted in rallying the stern moralist of whom others stood in awe, and no one, according to Boswell, could take equal liberty with him with impunity. Johnson, it is well known, was often shabby and negligent in his dress, and not over-cleanly in his person. On receiving a pension from the crown, his friends vied with each other in respectful congratulations. Beauclerc simply scanned his person with a whimsical glance, and hoped that, like Falstaff, "he 'd in future purge and live cleanly like a gentleman." Johnson took the hint with unexpected good-humor, and profited by it.

Still Beauclerc's satirical vein, which darted shafts on every side, was not always tolerated by Johnson. "Sir," said he on one occasion, "you never open your mouth but with intention to give pain; and you have often given me pain, not from the power of what you have said, but from seeing your intention."

When it was at first proposed to enroll Goldsmith among the members of this association, there seems to have been

some demur; at least so says the pompous Hawkins. "As he wrote for the booksellers, we of the club looked on him as a mere literary drudge, equal to the task of compiling and translating, but little capable of original and still less of poetical composition."

Even for some time after his admission he continued to be regarded in a dubious light by some of the members. Johnson and Reynolds, of course, were well aware of his merits, nor was Burke a stranger to them; but to the others he was as yet a sealed book, and the outside was not prepossessing. His ungainly person and awkward manners were against him with men accustomed to the graces of society, and he was not sufficiently at home to give play to his humor and to that bonhommie which won the hearts of all who knew him. He felt strange and out of place in this new sphere; he felt at times the cool satirical eye of the courtly Beauclerc scanning him, and the more he attempted to appear at his ease, the more awkward he became.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Describe the members of the club.

2. What are some of Sir Joshua Reynolds's pictures that may be seen in this country?

3. Why should the meetings of the club have become famous? Is there any club in this country the meetings of which correspond in any sense with the meetings of the Johnson-Goldsmith club?

4. Why does Irving give more space to Langton and Beauclerc than to the other members?

CHAPTER XV

Johnson a Monitor to Goldsmith; Finds him in Distress with his Landlady; Relieved by the Vicar of Wakefield — The Oratorio — Poem of the Traveller — The Poet and his Dog — Success of the Poem — Astonishment of the Club — Observations on the Poem.

Johnson had now become one of Goldsmith's best friends and advisers. He knew all the weak points of his character, but he knew also his merits; and while he would rebuke him like a child, and rail at his errors and follies, he would suffer no one else to undervalue him. Goldsmith knew the soundness of his judgment and his practical benevolence, and often sought his counsel and aid amid the difficulties into which his heedlessness was continually plunging him.

"I received one morning," says Johnson, "a message from poor Goldsmith that he was in great distress, and, as it was not in his power to come to me, begging that I would come to him as soon as possible. I sent him a guinea, and promised to come to him directly. I accordingly went as soon as I was dressed, and found that his landlady had arrested him for his rent, at which he was in a violent passion: I perceived that he had already changed my guinea, and had a bottle of Madeira and a glass before him. I put the cork into the bottle, desired he would be calm, and began to talk to him of the means by which he might be extricated. He then told me he had a novel ready for the press, which he produced to me. I looked into it and saw its merit; told the landlady I should soon return; and, having gone to a bookseller, sold it for sixty pounds. I brought Goldsmith the money, and he discharged his rent, not without rating his landlady in a high tone for having used him so ill."

The novel in question was the "Vicar of Wakefield"; the bookseller to whom Johnson sold it was Francis Newbery, nephew to John. Strange as it may seem, this captivating work, which has obtained and preserved an almost unrivalled popularity in various languages, was so little appreciated by the bookseller, that he kept it by him for nearly two years unpublished!

Goldsmith had, as yet, produced nothing of moment in poetry. Among his literary jobs, it is true, was an Oratorio entitled "The Captivity," founded on the bondage of the Israelites in Babylon. It was one of those unhappy offsprings of the Muse ushered into existence amid the distortions of music. Most of the Oratorio has passed into oblivion; but the following song from it will never die.

"The wretch condemned from life to part,
Still, still on hope relies,
And every pang that rends the heart
Bids expectation rise.

"Hope, like the glimmering taper's light,
Illumes and cheers our way;
And still, as darker grows the night,
Emits a brighter ray."

Goldsmith distrusted his qualifications to succeed in poetry, and doubted the disposition of the public mind in regard to it. "I fear," said he, "I have come too late into the world; Pope and other poets have taken up the places in the temple of Fame; and as few at any period can possess poetical reputation, a man of genius can now hardly acquire it." Again, on another occasion, he observes: "Of all kinds of ambition, as things are now circumstanced, perhaps that which pursues poetical fame is the wildest. What from the increased refinement of the times, from the diversity of judgment produced by opposing systems of criticism, and from the more prevalent divisions of opinion influenced by

party, the strongest and happiest efforts can expect to please but in a very narrow circle."

At this very time he had by him his poem of "The Traveller." The plan of it, as has already been observed, was conceived many years before, during his travels in Switzerland, and a sketch of it sent from that country to his brother Henry in Ireland. The original outline is said to have embraced a wider scope; but it was probably contracted through diffidence, in the process of finishing the parts. It had laid by him for several years in a crude state, and it was with extreme hesitation and after much revision that he at length submitted it to Dr. Johnson. The frank and warm approbation of the latter encouraged him to finish it for the press; and Dr. Johnson himself contributed a few lines towards the conclusion.

We hear much about "poetic inspiration," and the "poet's eye in a fine phrensy rolling;" but Sir Joshua Reynolds gives an anecdote of Goldsmith while engaged upon his poem, calculated to cure our notions about the ardor of composition. Calling upon the poet one day, he opened the door without ceremony, and found him in the double occupation of turning a couplet and teaching a pet dog to sit upon his haunches. At one time he would glance his eye at his desk, and at another shake his finger at the dog to make him retain his position. The last lines on the page were still wet; they form a part of the description of Italy:

> "By sports like these are all their cares beguiled,
> The sports of children satisfy the child."

Goldsmith, with his usual good-humor, joined in the laugh caused by his whimsical employment, and acknowledged that his boyish sport with the dog suggested the stanza.

The poem was published on the 19th of December, 1764, in a quarto form, by Newbery, and was the first of his works

to which Goldsmith prefixed his name. As a testimony of cherished and well-merited affection, he dedicated it to his brother Henry. There is an amusing affectation of indifference as to its fate expressed in the dedication. "What reception a poem may find," says he, "which has neither abuse, party, nor blank verse to support it, I cannot tell, nor am I solicitous to know." The truth is, no one was more emulous and anxious for poetic fame; and never was he more anxious than in the present instance, for it was his grand stake. Mr. Johnson aided the launching of the poem by a favorable notice in the "Critical Review"; other periodical works came out in its favor. Some of the author's friends complained that it did not command instant and wide popularity; that it was a poem to win, not to strike: it went on rapidly increasing in favor; in three months a second edition was issued; shortly afterwards, a third; then a fourth; and, before the year was out, the author was pronounced the best poet of his time.

The appearance of "The Traveller" at once altered Goldsmith's intellectual standing in the estimation of society; but its effect upon the club, if we may judge from the account given by Hawkins, was almost ludicrous. They were lost in astonishment that a "newspaper essayist" and "bookseller's drudge" should have written such a poem. On the evening of its announcement to them Goldsmith had gone away early, after "rattling away as usual," and they knew not how to reconcile his heedless garrulity with the serene beauty, the easy grace, the sound good sense, and the occasional elevation of his poetry. They could scarcely believe that such magic numbers had flowed from a man to whom in general, says Johnson, "it was with difficulty they could give a hearing." "Well," exclaimed Chamier, "I do believe he wrote this poem himself, and let me tell you, that is believing a great deal."

At the next meeting of the club, Chamier sounded the author a little about his poem. "Mr. Goldsmith," said he, "what do you mean by the last word in the first line of your 'Traveller,' 'Remote, unfriended, melancholy, *slow*'? — do you mean tardiness of locomotion?" — "Yes," replied Goldsmith, inconsiderately, being probably flurried at the moment. "No, sir," interposed his protecting friend Johnson, "you did not mean tardiness of locomotion; you meant that sluggishness of mind which comes upon a man in solitude." "Ah," exclaimed Goldsmith, "*that* was what I meant." Chamier immediately believed that Johnson himself had written the line, and a rumor became prevalent that he was the author of many of the finest passages. This was ultimately set at rest by Johnson himself, who marked with a pencil all the verses he had contributed, nine in number, inserted towards the conclusion, and by no means the best in the poem. He moreover, with generous warmth, pronounced it the finest poem that had appeared since the days of Pope.

But one of the highest testimonials to the charm of the poem was given by Miss Reynolds, who had toasted poor Goldsmith as the ugliest man of her acquaintance. Shortly after the appearance of "The Traveller," Dr. Johnson read it aloud from beginning to end in her presence. "Well," exclaimed she, when he had finished, "I never more shall think Dr. Goldsmith ugly!"

On another occasion, when the merits of "The Traveller" were discussed at Reynolds's board, Langton declared "there was not a bad line in the poem, not one of Dryden's careless verses." "I was glad," observed Reynolds, "to hear Charles Fox say it was one of the finest poems in the English language." "Why was you glad?" rejoined Langton, "you surely had no doubt of this before." "No," interposed Johnson, decisively; "the merit of 'The Traveller' is so well

established that Mr. Fox's praise cannot augment it, nor his censure diminish it."

Boswell, who was absent from England at the time of the publication of the "Traveller," was astonished, on his return, to find Goldsmith, whom he had so much undervalued, suddenly elevated almost to a par with his idol. He accounted for it by concluding that much both of the sentiments and expression of the poem had been derived from conversations with Johnson. "He imitates you, sir," said this incarnation of toadyism. "Why no, sir," replied Johnson, "Jack Hawksworth is one of my imitators, but not Goldsmith. Goldy, sir, has great merit." "But, sir, he is much indebted to you for his getting so high in the public estimation." "Why, sir, he has, perhaps, got *sooner* to it by his intimacy with me."

The poem went through several editions in the course of the first year, and received some few additions and corrections from the author's pen. It produced a golden harvest to Mr. Newbery; but all the remuneration on record, doled out by his niggard hand to the author, was twenty guineas!

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Make an outline for a composition on Goldsmith's heedlessness. Develop the first two main divisions of your outline into an essay of about two hundred words.

2. Has the contemporary judgment of about 1765, regarding Goldsmith as the best poet of his time, been sustained? What other poets wrote at about this period?

3. What characteristics in the man Goldsmith made possible his writing "The Traveller"?

4. What was Goldsmith's pay for the two poems which made his everlasting fame?

5. What was the first of Goldsmith's works to which he prefixed his name? Why had his name not been printed as the author of preceding works?

CHAPTER XVI

New Lodgings — Johnson's Compliment — A Titled Patron — The Poet at Northumberland House — His Independence of the Great — The Countess of Northumberland — Edwin and Angelina — Gosfield and Lord Clare — Publication of Essays — Evils of a Rising Reputation — Hangers-on — Job-Writing — Goody Two-shoes — A Medical Campaign — Mrs. Sidebotham.

Goldsmith, now that he was rising in the world, and becoming a notoriety, felt himself called upon to improve his style of living. He accordingly emerged from Wine-Office Court, and took chambers in the Temple. It is true they were but of humble pretensions, situated on what was then the library staircase, and it would appear that he was a kind of inmate with Jeffs, the butler of the society. Still he was in the Temple, that classic region rendered famous by the Spectator and other essayists as the abode of gay wits and thoughtful men of letters; and which, with its retired courts and embowered gardens, in the very heart of a noisy metropolis, is, to the quiet-seeking student and author, an oasis freshening with verdure in the midst of a desert. Johnson, who had become a kind of growling supervisor of the poet's affairs, paid him a visit soon after he had installed himself in his new quarters, and went prying about the apartment, in his near-sighted manner, examining everything minutely. Goldsmith was fidgeted by this curious scrutiny, and apprehending a disposition to find fault, exclaimed, with the air of a man who had money in both pockets, "I shall soon be in better chambers than these." The harmless bravado drew a reply from Johnson, which touched the chord of proper pride. "Nay, sir," said he, "never mind that. Nil te quæsiveris extra," — implying

that his reputation rendered him independent of outward show. Happy would it have been for poor Goldsmith, could he have kept this consolatory compliment perpetually in mind, and squared his expenses accordingly.

Among the persons of rank who were struck with the merits of the "Traveller" was the Earl (afterwards Duke) of Northumberland. He procured several other of Goldsmith's writings, the perusal of which tended to elevate the author in his good opinion, and to gain for him his good will. The Earl held the office of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and understanding Goldsmith was an Irishman, was disposed to extend to him the patronage which his high post afforded. He intimated the same to his relative, Dr. Percy, who, he found, was well acquainted with the poet, and expressed a wish that the latter should wait upon him. Here, then, was another opportunity for Goldsmith to better his fortune, had he been knowing and worldly enough to profit by it. Unluckily the path to fortune lay through the aristocratical mazes of Northumberland House, and the poet blundered at the outset. The following is the account he used to give of his visit: "I dressed myself in the best manner I could, and, after studying some compliments I thought necessary on such an occasion, proceeded to Northumberland House, and acquainted the servants that I had particular business with the Duke. They showed me into an antechamber, where, after waiting some time, a gentleman, very elegantly dressed, made his appearance: taking him for the Duke, I delivered all the fine things I had composed in order to compliment him on the honor he had done me; when, to my great astonishment, he told me I had mistaken him for his master, who would see me immediately. At that instant the Duke came into the apartment, and I was so confounded on the occasion that I wanted words barely sufficient to express the sense I entertained of the

Duke's politeness, and went away exceedingly chagrined at the blunder I had committed."

Sir John Hawkins, in his "Life of Dr. Johnson," gives some farther particulars of this visit, of which he was, in part, a witness. "Having one day," says he, "a call to make on the late Duke (then Earl) of Northumberland, I found Goldsmith waiting for an audience in an outer room: I asked him what had brought him there; he told me, an invitation from his lordship. I made my business as short as I could, and, as a reason, mentioned that Dr. Goldsmith was waiting without. The Earl asked me if I was acquainted with him. I told him that I was, adding what I thought was most likely to recommend him. I retired, and stayed in the outer room to take him home. Upon his coming out, I asked him the result of his conversation. 'His lordship,' said he, 'told me he had read my poem, meaning the "Traveller," and was much delighted with it; that he was going to be lord-lieutenant of Ireland, and that, hearing I was a native of that country, he should be glad to do me any kindness.' 'And what did you answer,' said I, 'to this gracious offer?' 'Why,' said he, 'I could say nothing but that I had a brother there, a clergyman, that stood in need of help: as for myself, I have no great dependence on the promises of great men; I look to the booksellers for support; they are my best friends, and I am not inclined to forsake them for others.'" "Thus," continues Sir John, "did this idiot in the affairs of the world trifle with his fortunes, and put back the hand that was held out to assist him."

We cannot join with Sir John in his worldly sneer at the conduct of Goldsmith on this occasion. While we admire that honest independence of spirit which prevented him from asking favors for himself, we love that warmth of affection which instantly sought to advance the fortunes of a brother; but the peculiar merits of poor Goldsmith seem to

have been little understood by the Hawkinses, the Boswells, and the other biographers of the day.

After all, the introduction to Northumberland House did not prove so complete a failure as the humorous account given by Goldsmith, and the cynical account given by Sir John Hawkins, might lead one to suppose. Dr. Percy, the heir male of the ancient Percies, brought the poet into the acquaintance of his kinswoman, the countess; who, before her marriage with the Earl, was in her own right heiress of the House of Northumberland. "She was a lady," says Boswell, "not only of high dignity of spirit, such as became her noble blood, but of excellent understanding and lively talents." Under her auspices a poem of Goldsmith's had an aristocratical introduction to the world. This was the beautiful ballad of "The Hermit," originally published under the name of "Edwin and Angelina." It was suggested by an old English ballad beginning "Gentle Herdsman," shown him by Dr. Percy, who was at that time making his famous collection, entitled "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry," which he submitted to the inspection of Goldsmith prior to publication. A few copies only of "The Hermit" were printed at first, with the following title-page: "Edwin and Angelina: a Ballad. By Mr. Goldsmith. Printed for the Amusement of the Countess of Northumberland."

All this, though it may not have been attended with any immediate pecuniary advantage, contributed to give Goldsmith's name and poetry the high stamp of fashion, so potent in England: the circle at Northumberland House, however, was of too stately and aristocratical a nature to be much to his taste, and we do not find that he became familiar in it.

He was much more at home at Gosfield, the seat of his countryman, Robert Nugent, afterwards Baron Nugent and

Viscount Clare, who appreciated his merits even more heartily than the Earl of Northumberland, and occasionally made him his guest both in town and country. Nugent is described as a jovial voluptuary, who left the Roman-Catholic for the Protestant religion, with a view to bettering his fortunes; he had an Irishman's inclination for rich widows, and an Irishman's luck with the sex; having been thrice married, and gained a fortune with each wife. He was now nearly sixty, with a remarkably loud voice, broad Irish brogue, and ready, but somewhat coarse wit. With all his occasional coarseness he was capable of high thought, and had produced poems which showed a truly poetic vein. He was long a member of the House of Commons, where his ready wit, his fearless decision, and good-humored audacity of expression always gained him a hearing, though his tall person and awkward manner gained him the nickname of Squire Gawky among the political scribblers of the day. With a patron of this jovial temperament, Goldsmith probably felt more at ease than with those of higher refinement.

The celebrity which Goldsmith had acquired by his poem of "The Traveller" occasioned a resuscitation of many of his miscellaneous and anonymous tales and essays from the various newspapers and other transient publications in which they lay dormant. These he published in 1765, in a collected form, under the title of "Essays by Mr. Goldsmith." "The following Essays," observes he in his preface, "have already appeared at different times, and in different publications. The pamphlets in which they were inserted being generally unsuccessful, these shared the common fate, without assisting the booksellers' aims, or extending the author's reputation. The public were too strenuously employed with their own follies to be assiduous in estimating mine; so that many of my best attempts in this way

have fallen victims to the transient topic of the times — the Ghost in Cock Lane, or the Siege of Ticonderoga.

"But, though they have passed pretty silently into the world, I can by no means complain of their circulation. The magazines and papers of the day have indeed been liberal enough in this respect. Most of these essays have been regularly reprinted twice or thrice a year, and conveyed to the public through the kennel of some engaging compilation. If there be a pride in multiplied editions, I have seen some of my labors sixteen times reprinted, and claimed by different parents as their own. I have seen them flourished at the beginning with praise, and signed at the end with the names of Philautos, Philalethes, Phileleutheros, and Philanthropos. It is time, however, at last to vindicate my claims; and as these entertainers of the public, as they call themselves, have partly lived upon me for some years, let me now try if I cannot live a little upon myself."

It was but little, in fact; for all the pecuniary emolument he received from the volume was twenty guineas. It had a good circulation, however, was translated into French, and has maintained its stand among the British classics.

Notwithstanding that the reputation of Goldsmith had greatly risen, his finances were often at a very low ebb, owing to his heedlessness as to expense, his liability to be imposed upon, and a spontaneous and irresistible propensity to give to every one who asked. The very rise in his reputation had increased these embarrassments. It had enlarged his circle of needy acquaintances, authors poorer in pocket than himself, who came in search of literary counsel; which generally meant a guinea and a breakfast. And then his Irish hangers-on! "Our Doctor," said one of these sponges, "had a constant levee of his distressed countrymen, whose wants, as far as he was able, he always relieved; and he has

often been known to leave himself without a guinea, in order to supply the necessities of others."

This constant drainage of the purse therefore obliged him to undertake all jobs proposed by the booksellers, and to keep up a kind of running account with Mr. Newbery; who was his banker on all occasions, sometimes for pounds, sometimes for shillings; but who was a rigid accountant, and took care to be amply repaid in manuscript. Many effusions, hastily penned in these moments of exigency, were published anonymously, and never claimed. Some of them have but recently been traced to his pen; while of many the true authorship will probably never be discovered. Among others, it is suggested, and with great probability, that he wrote for Mr. Newbery the famous nursery story of "Goody Two Shoes," which appeared in 1765, at a moment when Goldsmith was scribbling for Newbery, and much pressed for funds. Several quaint little tales introduced in his Essays show that he had a turn for this species of mock history; and the advertisement and title-page bear the stamp of his sly and playful humor.

"We are desired to give notice that there is in the press, and speedily will be published, either by subscription or otherwise, as the public shall please to determine, the 'History of Little Goody Two Shoes, otherwise Mrs. Margery Two Shoes'; with the means by which she acquired learning and wisdom, and, in consequence thereof, her estate; set forth at large for the benefit of those

> "Who, from a state of rags and care,
> And having shoes but half a pair,
> Their fortune and their fame should fix,
> And gallop in a coach and six."

The world is probably not aware of the ingenuity, humor, good sense, and sly satire contained in many of the old English nursery-tales. They have evidently been the sportive

productions of able writers, who would not trust their names to productions that might be considered beneath their dignity. The ponderous works on which they relied for immortality have perhaps sunk into oblivion, and carried their names down with them; while their unacknowledged offspring, "Jack the Giant Killer," "Giles Gingerbread," and "Tom Thumb," flourish in wide-spreading and never-ceasing popularity.

As Goldsmith had now acquired popularity and an extensive acquaintance, he attempted, with the advice of his friends, to procure a more regular and ample support by resuming the medical profession. He accordingly launched himself upon the town in style; hired a man-servant; replenished his wardrobe at considerable expense, and appeared in a professional wig and cane, purple silk small-clothes, and a scarlet roquelaure buttoned to the chin: a fantastic garb, as we should think at the present day, but not unsuited to the fashion of the times.

With his sturdy little person thus arrayed in the unusual magnificence of purple and fine linen, and his scarlet roquelaure flaunting from his shoulders, he used to strut into the apartments of his patients swaying his three-cornered hat in one hand and his medical sceptre, the cane, in the other, and assuming an air of gravity and importance suited to the solemnity of his wig; at least, such is the picture given of him by the waiting gentlewoman who let him into the chamber of one of his lady-patients.

He soon, however, grew tired and impatient of the duties and restraints of his profession; his practice was chiefly among his friends, and the fees were not sufficient for his maintenance; he was disgusted with attendance on sick-chambers and capricious patients, and looked back with longing to his tavern-haunts and broad convivial meetings, from which the dignity and duties of his medical calling restrained him. At length, on prescribing to a lady of his

acquaintance, who, to use a hackneyed phrase, "rejoiced" in the aristocratical name of Sidebotham, a warm dispute arose between him and the apothecary as to the quantity of medicine to be administered. The Doctor stood up for the rights and dignities of his profession, and resented the interference of the compounder of drugs. His rights and dignities, however, were disregarded; his wig and cane and scarlet roquelaure were of no avail; Mrs. Sidebotham sided with the hero of the pestle and mortar; and Goldsmith flung out of the house in a passion. "I am determined henceforth," said he to Topham Beauclerc, "to leave off prescribing for friends." "Do so, my dear Doctor," was the reply; "whenever you undertake to kill, let it be only your enemies."

This was the end of Goldsmith's medical career.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Was Sir John Hawkins too severe in calling Goldsmith an "idiot in the affairs of the world"?

2. Describe Goldsmith dressed as a member of the medical profession. Tell how his medical career ended. Does it seem unlikely that a good physician could be a good poet?

3. Discuss the value of nursery tales as literature. [This, of course, presupposes an attempt to define literature.]

CHAPTER XVII

Publication of the "Vicar of Wakefield"; Opinions concerning it: Of Dr. Johnson; Of Rogers the Poet; Of Goethe; Its Merits; Exquisite Extract — Attack by Kenrick — Reply — Book-Building — Project of a Comedy.

The success of the poem of "The Traveller," and the popularity which it had conferred on its author, now roused the attention of the bookseller in whose hands the novel of "The Vicar of Wakefield" had been slumbering for nearly two long years. The idea has generally prevailed that it was Mr. John Newbery to whom the manuscript had been sold, and much surprise has been expressed that he should be insensible to its merit and suffer it to remain unpublished, while putting forth various inferior writings by the same author. This, however, is a mistake; it was his nephew, Francis Newbery, who had become the fortunate purchaser. Still the delay is equally unaccountable. Some have imagined that the uncle and nephew had business arrangements together, in which this work was included, and that the elder Newbery, dubious of its success, retarded the publication until the full harvest of "The Traveller" should be reaped. Booksellers are prone to make egregious mistakes as to the merit of works in manuscripts; and to undervalue, if not reject, those of classic and enduring excellence, when destitute of that false brilliancy commonly called "effect." In the present instance, an intellect vastly superior to that of either of the booksellers was equally at fault. Dr. Johnson, speaking of the work to Boswell, some time subsequent to its publication, observed, "I myself did not think it would have much success. It was written and sold to a bookseller before 'The Traveller,' but published after, so little expectation had the bookseller

from it. Had it been sold after 'The Traveller,' he might have had twice as much money; *though sixty guineas was no mean price.*"

Sixty guineas for the "Vicar of Wakefield"! and this could be pronounced *no mean price* by Dr. Johnson, at that time the arbiter of British talent, and who had had an opportunity of witnessing the effect of the work upon the public mind; for its success was immediate. It came out on the 27th of March, 1766; before the end of May a second edition was called for; in three months more, a third; and so it went on, widening in a popularity that has never flagged. Rogers, the Nestor of British literature, whose refined purity of taste and exquisite mental organization rendered him eminently calculated to appreciate a work of the kind, declared that of all the books which through the fitful changes of three generations he had seen rise and fall, the charm of the "Vicar of Wakefield" had alone continued as at first; and could he revisit the world after an interval of many more generations, he should as surely look to find it undiminished. Nor has its celebrity been confined to Great Britain. Though so exclusively a picture of British scenes and manners, it has been translated into almost every language, and everywhere its charm has been the same. Goethe, the great genius of Germany, declared in his eighty-first year, that it was his delight at the age of twenty, that it had in a manner formed a part of his education, influencing his taste and feelings throughout life, and that he had recently read it again from beginning to end — with renewed delight, and with a grateful sense of the early benefit derived from it.

It is needless to expatiate upon the qualities of a work which has thus passed from country to country, and language to language, until it is now known throughout the whole reading world and is become a household book in every hand. The secret of its universal and enduring

popularity is undoubtedly its truth to nature, but to nature of the most amiable kind, to nature such as Goldsmith saw it. The author, as we have occasionally shown in the course of this memoir, took his scenes and characters in this, as in his other writings, from originals in his own motley experience; but he has given them as seen through the medium of his own indulgent eye, and has set them forth with the colorings of his own good head and heart. Yet how contradictory it seems that this, one of the most delightful pictures of home and homefelt happiness should be drawn by a homeless man; that the most amiable picture of domestic virtue and all the endearments of the married state should be drawn by a bachelor, who had been severed from domestic life almost from boyhood; that one of the most tender, touching, and affecting appeals on behalf of female loveliness should have been made by a man whose deficiency in all the graces of person and manner seemed to mark him out for a cynical disparager of the sex.

We cannot refrain from transcribing from the work a short passage illustrative of what we have said, and which within a wonderfully small compass comprises a world of beauty of imagery, tenderness of feeling, delicacy and refinement of thought, and matchless purity of style. The two stanzas which conclude it, in which are told a whole history of woman's wrongs and sufferings, is, for pathos, simplicity, and euphony, a gem in the language. The scene depicted is where the poor Vicar is gathering around him the wrecks of his shattered family, and endeavoring to rally them back to happiness.

"The next morning the sun arose with peculiar warmth for the season, so that we agreed to breakfast together on the honeysuckle bank; where, while we sat, my youngest daughter at my request joined her voice to the concert on the trees about us. It was in this place my poor Olivia first met

her seducer, and every object served to recall her sadness. But that melancholy which is excited by objects of pleasure, or inspired by sounds of harmony, soothes the heart instead of corroding it. Her mother, too, upon this occasion, felt a pleasing distress, and wept and loved her daughter as before. 'Do, my pretty Olivia,' cried she, 'let us have that melancholy air your father was so fond of; your sister Sophy has already obliged us. Do, child, it will please your old father.' She complied in a manner so exquisitely pathetic as moved me.

"'When lovely woman stoops to folly,
And finds too late that men betray,
What charm can soothe her melancholy,
What art can wash her guilt away?

"'The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from every eye,
To give repentance to her lover,
And wring his bosom — is to die.'"

Scarce had the "Vicar of Wakefield" made its appearance and been received with acclamation, than its author was subjected to one of the usual penalties that attend success. He was attacked in the newspapers. In one of the chapters he had introduced his ballad of "The Hermit," of which, as we have mentioned, a few copies had been printed some considerable time previously for the use of the Countess of Northumberland. This brought forth the following article in a fashionable journal of the day.

"*To the Printer of the 'St. James's Chronicle.'*

"Sir, — In the 'Reliques of Ancient Poetry,' published about two years ago, is a very beautiful little ballad, called 'A Friar of Orders Gray.' The ingenious editor, Mr. Percy, supposes that the stanzas sung by Ophelia in the play of

'Hamlet' were parts of some ballad well known in Shakspeare's time, and from these stanzas, with the addition of one or two of his own to connect them, he has formed the above-mentioned ballad; the subject of which is, a lady comes to a convent to inquire for her love who had been driven there by her disdain. She is answered by a friar that he is dead: —

> "'No, no, he is dead, gone to his death's bed.
> He never will come again.'

The lady weeps and laments her cruelty; the friar endeavors to comfort her with morality and religion, but all in vain; she expresses the deepest grief and the most tender sentiments of love, till at last the friar discovers himself: —

> "'And lo! beneath this gown of gray
> Thy own true love appears.'

"This catastrophe is very fine, and the whole, joined with the greatest tenderness, has the greatest simplicity; yet, though this ballad was so recently published in the 'Ancient Reliques,' Dr. Goldsmith has been hardy enough to publish a poem called 'The Hermit,' where the circumstances and catastrophe are exactly the same, only with this difference, that the natural simplicity and tenderness of the original are almost entirely lost in the languid smoothness and tedious paraphrase of the copy, which is as short of the merits of Mr. Percy's ballad as the insipidity of negus is to the genuine flavor of champagne.

"I am, sir, yours, &c.,
"DETECTOR."

This attack, supposed to be by Goldsmith's constant persecutor, the malignant Kenrick, drew from him the following note to the editor: —

"Sir, — As there is nothing I dislike so much as newspaper controversy, particularly upon trifles, permit me to be as concise as possible in informing a correspondent of yours that I recommended 'Blainville's Travels' because I thought the book was a good one; and I think so still. I said I was told by the bookseller that it was then first published; but in that it seems I was misinformed, and my reading was not extensive enough to set me right.

"Another correspondent of yours accuses me of having taken a ballad I published some time ago, from one by the ingenious Mr. Percy. I do not think there is any great resemblance between the two pieces in question. If there be any, his ballad was taken from mine. I read it to Mr. Percy some years ago; and he, as we both considered these things as trifles at best, told me, with his usual good-humor, the next time I saw him, that he had taken my plan to form the fragments of Shakspeare into a ballad of his own. He then read me his little Cento, if I may so call it, and I highly approved it. Such petty anecdotes as these are scarcely worth printing; and, were it not for the busy disposition of some of your correspondents, the public should never have known that he owes me the hint of his ballad, or that I am obliged to his friendship and learning for communications of a much more important nature.

"I am, sir, yours, &c.,

"Oliver Goldsmith."

The unexpected circulation of the "Vicar of Wakefield" enriched the publisher, but not the author. Goldsmith no doubt thought himself entitled to participate in the profits of the repeated editions; and a memorandum, still extant, shows that he drew upon Mr. Francis Newbery, in the month of June, for fifteen guineas, but that the bill was returned dishonored. He continued, therefore, his usual

job-work for the booksellers, writing introductions, prefaces, and head- and tail-pieces for new works; revising, touching up, and modifying travels and voyages; making compilations of prose and poetry, and "building books," as he sportively termed it. These tasks required little labor or talent, but that taste and touch which are the magic of gifted minds. His terms began to be proportioned to his celebrity. If his price was at any time objected to, "Why, sir," he would say, "it may seem large; but then a man may be many years working in obscurity before his taste and reputation are fixed or estimated; and then he is, as in other professions, only paid for his previous labors."

He was, however, prepared to try his fortune in a different walk of literature from any he had yet attempted. We have repeatedly adverted to his fondness for the drama; he was a frequent attendant at the theatres; though, as we have shown, he considered them under gross mismanagement. He thought, too, that a vicious taste prevailed among those who wrote for the stage. "A new species of dramatic composition," says he, in one of his essays, "has been introduced under the name of *sentimental comedy*, in which the virtues of private life are exhibited rather than the vices exposed; and the distresses rather than the faults of mankind make our interest in the piece. In these plays almost all the characters are good, and exceedingly generous; they are lavish enough of their tin money on the stage; and though they want humor, have abundance of sentiment and feeling. If they happen to have faults or foibles, the spectator is taught not only to pardon, but to applaud them in consideration of the goodness of their hearts; so that folly, instead of being ridiculed, is commended, and the comedy aims at touching our passions, without the power of being truly pathetic. In this manner we are likely to lose one great source of entertainment on the stage; for while the

comic poet is invading the province of the tragic muse, he leaves her lively sister quite neglected. Of this, however, he is no ways solicitous, as he measures his fame by his profits. . . . .

"Humor at present seems to be departing from the stage; and it will soon happen that our comic players will have nothing left for it but a fine coat and a song. It depends upon the audience whether they will actually drive those poor merry creatures from the stage, or sit at a play as gloomy as at the tabernacle. It is not easy to recover an art when once lost; and it will be a just punishment, that when, by our being too fastidious, we have banished humor from the stage, we should ourselves be deprived of the art of laughing."

Symptoms of reform in the drama had recently taken place. The comedy of the "Clandestine Marriage," the joint production of Colman and Garrick, and suggested by Hogarth's inimitable pictures of *Marriage à la mode*, had taken the town by storm, crowded the theatre with fashionable audiences, and formed one of the leading literary topics of the year. Goldsmith's emulation was roused by its success. The comedy was in what he considered the legitimate line, totally different from the sentimental school; it presented pictures of real life, delineations of character and touches of humor, in which he felt himself calculated to excel. The consequence was, that in the course of this year (1766) he commenced a comedy of the same class, to be entitled the "Good-Natured Man," at which he diligently wrought whenever the hurried occupation of "book-building" allowed him leisure.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. How do you account for the fact that "The Vicar of Wakefield" was translated into "almost every language"?

2. What do you find that is commendable in Goldsmith's letter to the editor of the *St. James's Chronicle?* Explain why the "forms of closing" of most letters nowadays differ from the usual endings of Goldsmith's letters.

3. Would sixty guineas in our day be considered good pay for a novel reaching three editions in a few months?

4. Discuss Goldsmith's ideas on the drama.

5. Have any "egregious mistakes" regarding the value of manuscripts been made of recent years by American publishers?

6. "Humor at present seems to be departing from the stage." Is this true now?

CHAPTER XVIII

Social Position of Goldsmith; His Colloquial Contests with Johnson — Anecdotes and Illustrations.

The social position of Goldsmith had undergone a material change since the publication of "The Traveller." Before that event he was but partially known as the author of some clever anonymous writings, and had been a tolerated member of the club and the Johnson circle, without much being expected from him. Now he had suddenly risen to literary fame, and become one of the *lions* of the day. The highest regions of intellectual society were now open to him; but he was not prepared to move in them with confidence and success. Ballymahon had not been a good school of manners at the outset of life; nor had his experience as a "poor student" at colleges and medical schools contributed to give him the polish of society. He had brought from Ireland, as he said, nothing but his "brogue and his blunders," and they had never left him. He had travelled, it is true; but the Continental tour which in those days gave the finishing grace to the education of a patrician youth, had, with poor Goldsmith, been little better than a course of literary vagabondizing. It had enriched his mind, deepened and widened the benevolence of his heart, and filled his memory with enchanting pictures, but it had contributed little to disciplining him for the polite intercourse of the world. His life in London had hitherto been a struggle with sordid cares and sad humiliations. "You scarcely can conceive," wrote he some time previously to his brother, "how much eight years of disappointment, anguish, and study have worn me

down." Several more years had since been added to the term during which he had trod the lowly walks of life. He had been a tutor, an apothecary's drudge, a petty physician of the suburbs, a bookseller's hack, drudging for daily bread. Each separate walk had been beset by its peculiar thorns and humiliations. It is wonderful how his heart retained its gentleness and kindness through all these trials; how his mind rose above the "meannesses of poverty," to which, as he says, he was compelled to submit; but it would be still more wonderful, had his manners acquired a tone corresponding to the innate grace and refinement of his intellect. He was near forty years of age when he published "The Traveller," and was lifted by it into celebrity. As is beautifully said of him by one of his biographers, "he has fought his way to consideration and esteem; but he bears upon him the scars of his twelve years' conflict; of the mean sorrows through which he has passed; and of the cheap indulgences he has sought relief and help from. There is nothing plastic in his nature now. His manners and habits are completely formed; and in them any further success can make little favorable change, whatever it may effect for his mind or genius."[1]

We are not to be surprised, therefore, at finding him make an awkard figure in the elegant drawing-rooms which were now open to him, and disappointing those who had formed an idea of him from the fascinating ease and gracefulness of his poetry.

Even the literary club, and the circle of which it formed a part, after their surprise at the intellectual flights of which he showed himself capable, fell into a conventional mode of judging and talking of him, and of placing him in absurd and whimsical points of view. His very celebrity operated here to his disadvantage. It brought him into continual

[1] Forster's "Goldsmith."

comparison with Johnson, who was the oracle of that circle and had given it a tone. Conversation was the great staple there, and of this Johnson was a master. He had been a reader and thinker from childhood: his melancholy temperament, which unfitted him for the pleasures of youth, had made him so. For many years past the vast variety of works he had been obliged to consult in preparing his Dictionary, had stored an uncommonly retentive memory with facts on all kinds of subjects; making it a perfect colloquial armory. "He had all his life," says Boswell, "habituated himself to consider conversation as a trial of intellectual vigor and skill. He had disciplined himself as a talker as well as a writer, making it a rule to impart whatever he knew in the most forcible language he could put it in, so that by constant practice and never suffering any careless expression to escape him, he had attained an extraordinary accuracy and command of language."

His conversation in all companies, according to Sir Joshua Reynolds, was such as to secure him universal attention, something above the usual colloquial style being always expected from him.

"I do not care," said Orme, the historian of Hindostan, "on what subject Johnson talks; but I love better to hear him talk than anybody. He either gives you new thoughts or a new coloring."

A stronger and more graphic eulogium is given by Dr. Percy. "The conversation of Johnson," says he, "is strong and clear, and may be compared to an antique statue, where every vein and muscle is distinct and clear."

Such was the colloquial giant with which Goldsmith's celebrity and his habits of intimacy brought him into continual comparison; can we wonder that he should appear to disadvantage? Conversation grave, discursive, and disputatious, such as Johnson excelled and delighted in, was to

him a severe task, and he never was good at a task of any kind. He had not, like Johnson, a vast fund of acquired facts to draw upon; nor a retentive memory to furnish them forth when wanted. He could not, like the great lexicographer, mould his ideas and balance his periods while talking. He had a flow of ideas, but it was apt to be hurried and confused; and, as he said of himself, he had contracted a hesitating and disagreeable manner of speaking. He used to say that he always argued best when he argued alone; that is to say, he could master a subject in his study, with his pen in his hand; but when he came into company he grew confused, and was unable to talk about it. Johnson made a remark concerning him to somewhat of the same purport. "No man," said he, "is more foolish than Goldsmith when he has not a pen in his hand, or more wise when he has." Yet with all this conscious deficiency he was continually getting involved in colloquial contests with Johnson and other prime talkers of the literary circle. He felt that he had become a notoriety, that he had entered the lists and was expected to make fight; so with that heedlessness which characterized him in everything else he dashed on at a venture, trusting to chance in this as in other things, and hoping occasionally to make a lucky hit. Johnson perceived his hap-hazard temerity, but gave him no credit for the real diffidence which lay at bottom. "The misfortune of Goldsmith in conversation," said he, "is this, he goes on without knowing how he is to get off. His genius is great, but his knowledge is small. As they say of a generous man it is a pity he is not rich, we may say of Goldsmith it is a pity he is not knowing. He would not keep his knowledge to himself." And, on another occasion, he observes: "Goldsmith, rather than not talk, will talk of what he knows himself to be ignorant, which can only end in exposing him. If in company with two founders, he would fall a-talking on

the method of making cannon, though both of them would soon see that he did not know what metal a cannon is made of." And again: "Goldsmith should not be forever attempting to shine in conversation; he has not temper for it, he is so much mortified when he fails. Sir, a game of jokes is composed partly of skill, partly of chance; a man may be beat at times by one who has not the tenth part of his wit. Now Goldsmith, putting himself against another, is like a man laying a hundred to one, who cannot spare the hundred. It is not worth a man's while. A man should not lay a hundred to one unless he can easily spare it, though he has a hundred chances for him; he can get but a guinea, and he may lose a hundred. Goldsmith is in this state. When he contends, if he gets the better, it is a very little addition to a man of his literary reputation; if he does not get the better, he is miserably vexed."

Johnson was not aware how much he was himself to blame in producing this vexation. "Goldsmith," said Miss Reynolds, "always appeared to be overawed by Johnson, particularly when in company with people of any consequence; always as if impressed with fear of disgrace; and indeed well he might. I have been witness to many mortifications he has suffered in Dr. Johnson's company."

It may not have been disgrace that he feared, but rudeness. The great lexicographer, spoiled by the homage of society, was still more prone than himself to lose temper when the argument went against him. He could not brook appearing to be worsted, but would attempt to bear down his adversary by the rolling thunder of his periods, and, when that failed, would become downright insulting. Boswell called it "having recourse to some sudden mode of robust sophistry"; but Goldsmith designated it much more happily. "There is no arguing with Johnson," said he,

"*for, when his pistol misses fire, he knocks you down with the but-end of it.*" [1]

In several of the intellectual collisions recorded by Boswell as triumphs of Dr. Johnson it really appears to us that Goldsmith had the best both of the wit and the argument, and especially of the courtesy and good-nature.

On one occasion he certainly gave Johnson a capital reproof as to his own colloquial peculiarities. Talking of fables, Goldsmith observed that the animals introduced in them seldom talked in character. "For instance," said he, "the fable of the little fishes, who saw birds fly over their heads, and, envying them, petitioned Jupiter to be changed into birds. The skill consists in making them talk like little fishes." Just then observing that Dr. Johnson was shaking his sides and laughing, he immediately added, "Why, Dr. Johnson, this is not so easy as you seem to think; for, if you were to make little fishes talk, they would talk like whales."

But though Goldsmith suffered frequent mortifications in society from the overbearing, and sometimes harsh, conduct of Johnson, he always did justice to his benevolence. When royal pensions were granted to Dr. Johnson and Dr. Shebbeare, a punster remarked, that the king had pensioned a *she-bear* and a *he-bear;* to which Goldsmith replied, "Johnson, to be sure, has a roughness in his manner, but no man alive has a more tender heart. *He has nothing of the bear but the skin.*"

Goldsmith, in conversation, shone most when he least thought of shining; when he gave up all effort to appear wise and learned, or to cope with the oracular sententiousness of Johnson, and gave way to his natural impulses.

[1] The following is given by Boswell, as an instance of robust sophistry: — "Once, when I was pressing upon him with visible advantage, he stopped me thus — 'My dear Boswell, let 's have no more of this; you 'll make nothing of it; I 'd rather hear you whistle a Scotch tune.'"

Even Boswell could perceive his merits on these occasions. "For my part," said he, condescendingly, "I like very well to hear *honest* Goldsmith talk away carelessly"; and many a much wiser man than Boswell delighted in those outpourings of a fertile fancy and a generous heart. In his happy moods, Goldsmith had an artless simplicity and buoyant good-humor, that led to a thousand amusing blunders and whimsical confessions, much to the entertainment of his intimates; yet in his most thoughtless garrulity there was occasionally the gleam of the gold and the flash of the diamond.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Make an outline for the life of Goldsmith from 1728 to 1767 under main headings suggested by Irving's statements in the first paragraph of this chapter.

2. Compare Goldsmith and Johnson as conversationalists.

3. What is to be gained in the art of conversation by never allowing a "careless" expression to escape one?

4. From what does it plainly appear that Irving admires the subject of his biography? Do you share in the admiration? Why? Would Irving's admiration be likely to make his statements about the life of Goldsmith unreliable?

5. Discuss Goldsmith in society. (Chapters XVIII and XIX.)

6. Why should the literary club get into the habit of placing Goldsmith in an absurd light?

CHAPTER XIX

Social Resorts — The Shilling Whist-Club — A Practical Joke — The Wednesday Club — The "Tun of Man" — The Pig-Butcher — Tom King — Hugh Kelly — Glover and his Characteristics.

Though Goldsmith's pride and ambition led him to mingle occasionally with high society, and to engage in the colloquial conflicts of the learned circle, in both of which he was ill at ease and conscious of being undervalued, yet he had some social resorts in which he indemnified himself for their restraints by indulging his humor without control. One of them was a shilling whist-club, which held its meetings at the Devil Tavern, near Temple Bar, a place rendered classic, we are told, by a club held there in old times, to which "rare Ben Jonson" had furnished the rules. The company was of a familiar, unceremonious kind, delighting in that very questionable wit which consists in playing off practical jokes upon each other. Of one of these Goldsmith was made the butt. Coming to the club one night in a hackney-coach, he gave the coachman by mistake a guinea instead of a shilling, which he set down as a dead loss, for there was no likelihood, he said, that a fellow of this class would have the honesty to return the money. On the next club-evening he was told a person at the street-door wished to speak with him. He went forth, but soon returned with a radiant countenance. To his surprise and delight the coachman had actually brought back the guinea. While he launched forth in praise of this unlooked-for piece of honesty, he declared it ought not to go unrewarded. Collecting a small sum from the club, and no doubt increasing it largely from his own purse, he dismissed the Jehu with many encomiums

on his good conduct. He was still chanting his praises, when one of the club requested a sight of the guinea thus honestly returned. To Goldsmith's confusion it proved to be a counterfeit. The universal burst of laughter which succeeded, and the jokes by which he was assailed on every side, showed him that the whole was a hoax, and the pretended coachman as much a counterfeit as the guinea. He was so disconcerted, it is said, that he soon beat a retreat for the evening.

Another of those free and easy clubs met on Wednesday evenings at the Globe Tavern in Fleet Street. It was somewhat in the style of the Three Jolly Pigeons: songs, jokes, dramatic imitations, burlesque parodies, and broad sallies of humor, formed a contrast to the sententious morality, pedantic casuistry, and polished sarcasm of the learned circle. Here a huge "tun of man," by the name of Gordon, used to delight Goldsmith by singing the jovial song of Nottingham Ale, and looking like a butt of it. Here, too, a wealthy pig-butcher, charmed, no doubt, by the mild philanthropy of "The Traveller," aspired to be on the most sociable footing with the author; and here was Tom King, the comedian, recently risen to consequence by his performance of Lord Ogleby in the new comedy of "The Clandestine Marriage."

A member of more note was one Hugh Kelly, a second-rate author, who, as he became a kind of competitor of Goldsmith's, deserves particular mention. He was an Irishman, about twenty-eight years of age, originally apprenticed to a staymaker in Dublin; then writer to a London attorney; then a Grub-Street hack; scribbling for magazines and newspapers. Of late he had set up for theatrical censor and satirist, and in a paper called "Thespis," in emulation of Churchill's "Rosciad," had harassed many of the poor actors without mercy, and often without wit; but had lavished his

incense on Garrick, who, in consequence, took him into favor. He was the author of several works of superficial merit, but which had sufficient vogue to inflate his vanity. This, however, must have been mortified on his first introduction to Johnson; after sitting a short time he got up to take leave, expressing a fear that a longer visit might be troublesome. "Not in the least, sir," said the surly moralist, "I had forgotten you were in the room." Johnson used to speak of him as a man who had written more than he had read.

A prime wag of this club was one of Goldsmith's poor countrymen and hangers-on, by the name of Glover. He had originally been educated for the medical profession, but had taken in early life to the stage, though apparently without much success. While performing at Cork, he undertook, partly in jest, to restore life to the body of a malefactor, who had just been executed. To the astonishment of every one, himself among the number, he succeeded. The miracle took wind. He abandoned the stage, resumed the wig and cane, and considered his fortune as secure. Unluckily, there were not many dead people to be restored to life in Ireland; his practice did not equal his expectation, so he came to London, where he continued to dabble indifferently, and rather unprofitably, in physic and literature.

He was a great frequenter of the Globe and Devil taverns, where he used to amuse the company by his talent at story-telling and his powers of mimicry, giving capital imitations of Garrick, Foote, Colman, Sterne, and other public characters of the day. He seldom happened to have money enough to pay his reckoning, but was always sure to find some ready purse among those who had been amused by his humors. Goldsmith, of course, was one of the readiest. It was through him that Glover was admitted to the Wednesday Club, of which his theatrical imitations became the delight.

Glover, however, was a little anxious for the dignity of his patron, which appeared to him to suffer from the over-familiarity of some of the members of the club. He was especially shocked by the free and easy tone in which Goldsmith was addressed by the pig-butcher. "Come, Noll," would he say, as he pledged him, "here's my service to you, old boy!"

Glover whispered to Goldsmith, that he "should not allow such liberties." "Let him alone," was the reply, "you'll see how civilly I'll let him down." After a time, he called out, with marked ceremony and politeness, "Mr. B., I have the honor of drinking your good health." Alas! dignity was not poor Goldsmith's forte: he could keep no one at a distance. "Thank'ee, thank'ee, Noll," nodded the pig-butcher, scarce taking the pipe out of his mouth. "I don't see the effect of your reproof," whispered Glover. "I give it up," replied Goldsmith, with a good-humored shrug; "I ought to have known before now there is no putting a pig in the right way."

Johnson used to be severe upon Goldsmith for mingling in these motley circles, observing, that, having been originally poor, he had contracted a love for low company. Goldsmith, however, was guided not by a taste for what was low, but for what was comic and characteristic. It was the feeling of the artist; the feeling which furnished out some of his best scenes in familiar life; the feeling with which "rare Ben Jonson" sought these very haunts and circles in days of yore, to study "Every Man in his Humor."

It was not always, however, that the humor of these associates was to his taste: as they became boisterous in their merriment, he was apt to become depressed. "The company of fools," says he, in one of his essays, "may at first make us smile, but at last never fails of making us melancholy." "Often he would become moody," says Glover,

"and would leave the party abruptly to go home and brood over his misfortune."

It is possible, however, that he went home for quite a different purpose: to commit to paper some scene or passage suggested for his comedy of "The Good-natured Man." The elaboration of humor is often a most serious task; and we have never witnessed a more perfect picture of mental misery than was once presented to us by a popular dramatic writer — still, we hope, living — whom we found in the agonies of producing a farce which subsequently set the theatres in a roar.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Does the incident of the counterfeit guinea seem to show a malignant spirit toward Goldsmith on the part of the members of the whist club?

2. Does it seem incongruous that a pig butcher should be charmed by "The Traveller"?

3. What was a Grub-Street hack?

4. Is it a severe criticism of a man to say that he wrote more than he read?

5. Where and how did Goldsmith get the nickname "Noll"?

6. Describe the members of the club that met at the Globe Tavern. How did this club differ from the literary club?

CHAPTER XX

The Great Cham of Literature and the King — Scene at Sir Joshua Reynolds's — Goldsmith accused of Jealousy — Negotiations with Garrick — The Author and the Actor; Their Correspondence.

The comedy of "The Good-natured Man" was completed by Goldsmith early in 1767, and submitted to the perusal of Johnson, Burke, Reynolds, and others of the literary club, by whom it was heartily approved. Johnson, who was seldom half-way either in censure or applause, pronounced it the best comedy that had been written since "The Provoked Husband," and promised to furnish the prologue. This immediately became an object of great solicitude with Goldsmith, knowing the weight an introduction from the Great Cham of literature would have with the public; but circumstances occurred which he feared might drive the comedy and the prologue from Johnson's thoughts. The latter was in the habit of visiting the royal library at the Queen's (Buckingham) House, a noble collection of books, in the formation of which he had assisted the librarian, Mr. Bernard, with his advice. One evening, as he was seated there by the fire reading, he was surprised by the entrance of the King (George III), then a young man, who sought this occasion to have a conversation with him. The conversation was varied and discursive, the King shifting from subject to subject according to his wont. "During the whole interview," says Boswell, "Johnson talked to his Majesty with profound respect, but still in his open, manly manner, with a sonorous voice, and never in that subdued tone which is commonly used at the levee and in the drawing-room. 'I found his Majesty wished I should talk,' said he, 'and I made it my

business to talk. I find it does a man good to be talked to by his sovereign. In the first place, a man cannot be in a passion.'" It would have been well for Johnson's colloquial disputants, could he have often been under such decorous restraint. Profoundly monarchical in his principles, he retired from the interview highly gratified with the conversation of the King and with his gracious behavior. "Sir," said he to the librarian, "they may talk of the King as they will, but he is the finest gentleman I have ever seen." — "Sir," said he subsequently to Bennet Langton, "his manners are those of as fine a gentleman as we may suppose Louis the Fourteenth or Charles the Second."

While Johnson's face was still radiant with the reflex of royalty, he was holding forth one day to a listening group at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, who were anxious to hear every particular of this memorable conversation. Among other questions, the King had asked him whether he was writing anything. His reply was, that he thought he had already done his part as a writer. "I should have thought so too," said the King, "if you had not written so well." — "No man," said Johnson, commenting on this speech, "could have made a handsomer compliment; and it was fit for a King to pay. It was decisive." — "But did you make no reply to this high compliment?" asked one of the company. "No, sir," replied the profoundly deferential Johnson; "when the King had said it, it was to be so. It was not for me to bandy civilities with my sovereign."

During all the time that Johnson was thus holding forth, Goldsmith, who was present, appeared to take no interest in the royal theme, but remained seated on a sofa at a distance, in a moody fit of abstraction; at length recollecting himself, he sprang up, and advancing, exclaimed, with what Boswell calls his usual "frankness and simplicity," — "Well, you acquitted yourself in this conversation better than I should

have done, for I should have bowed and stammered through the whole of it." He afterwards explained his seeming inattention by saying that his mind was completely occupied about his play, and by fears lest Johnson, in his present state of royal excitement, would fail to furnish the much-desired prologue.

How natural and truthful is this explanation. Yet Boswell presumes to pronounce Goldsmith's inattention affected, and attributes it to jealousy. "It was strongly suspected," says he, "that he was fretting with chagrin and envy at the singular honor Dr. Johnson had lately enjoyed." It needed the littleness of mind of Boswell to ascribe such pitiful motives to Goldsmith, and to entertain such exaggerated notions of the honor paid to Dr. Johnson.

"The Good-natured Man" was now ready for performance, but the question was, how to get it upon the stage. The affairs of Covent Garden, for which it had been intended, were thrown into confusion by the recent death of Rich, the manager. Drury Lane was under the management of Garrick; but a feud, it will be recollected, existed between him and the poet, from the animadversions of the latter on the mismanagement of theatrical affairs, and the refusal of the former to give the poet his vote for the secretaryship of the Society of Arts. Times, however, were changed. Goldsmith, when that feud took place, was an anonymous writer, almost unknown to fame, and of no circulation in society. Now he had become a literary lion; he was a member of the Literary Club; he was the associate of Johnson, Burke, Topham Beauclerc, and other magnates, — in a word, he had risen to consequence in the public eye, and of course was of consequence in the eyes of David Garrick. Sir Joshua Reynolds saw the lurking scruples of pride existing between the author and actor, and thinking it a pity that two men of such congenial talents, and who might be so

serviceable to each other, should be kept asunder by a worn-out pique, exerted his friendly offices to bring them together. The meeting took place in Reynolds's house in Leicester Square. Garrick, however, could not entirely put off the mock majesty of the stage; he meant to be civil, but he was rather too gracious and condescending. Tom Davies, in his "Life of Garrick," gives an amusing picture of the coming together of these punctilious parties. "The manager," says he, "was fully conscious of his (Goldsmith's) merit, and perhaps more ostentatious of his abilities to serve a dramatic author than became a man of his prudence; Goldsmith was, on his side, as fully persuaded of his own importance and independent greatness. Mr. Garrick, who had so long been treated with the complimentary language paid to a successful patentee and admired actor, expected that the writer would esteem the patronage of his play a favor; Goldsmith rejected all ideas of kindness in a bargain that was intended to be of mutual advantage to both parties, and in this he was certainly justifiable; Mr. Garrick could reasonably expect no thanks for the acting a new play, which he would have rejected if he had not been convinced it would have amply rewarded his pains and expense. I believe the manager was willing to accept the play, but he wished to be courted to it; and the Doctor was not disposed to purchase his friendship by the resignation of his sincerity." They separated, however, with an understanding on the part of Goldsmith that his play would be acted. The conduct of Garrick subsequently proved evasive, not through any lingerings of past hostility, but from habitual indecision in matters of the kind, and from real scruples of delicacy. He did not think the piece likely to succeed on the stage, and avowed that opinion to Reynolds and Johnson, — but hesitated to say as much to Goldsmith, through fear of wounding his feelings. A further misunderstanding was the result of this

want of decision and frankness; repeated interviews and some correspondence took place without bringing matters to a point, and in the mean time the theatrical season passed away.

Goldsmith's pocket, never well supplied, suffered grievously by this delay, and he considered himself entitled to call upon the manager, who still talked of acting the play, to advance him forty pounds upon a note of the younger Newbery. Garrick readily complied, but subsequently suggested certain important alterations in the comedy as indispensable to its success; these were indignantly rejected by the author, but pertinaciously insisted on by the manager. Garrick proposed to leave the matter to the arbitration of Whitehead, the laureate, who officiated as his "reader" and elbow-critic. Goldsmith was more indignant than ever, and a violent dispute ensued, which was only calmed by the interference of Burke and Reynolds.

Just at this time, order came out of confusion in the affairs of Covent Garden. A pique having risen between Colman and Garrick, in the course of their joint authorship of "The Clandestine Marriage," the former had become manager and part-proprietor of Covent Garden, and was preparing to open a powerful competition with his former colleague. On hearing of this, Goldsmith made overtures to Colman; who, without waiting to consult his fellow-proprietors, who were absent, gave instantly a favorable reply. Goldsmith felt the contrast of this warm, encouraging conduct, to the chilling delays and objections of Garrick. He at once abandoned his piece to the discretion of Colman. "Dear sir," says he, in a letter dated Temple Garden Court, July 9th, "I am very much obliged to you for your kind partiality in my favor, and your tenderness in shortening the interval of my expectation. That the play is liable to many objections I well know, but

I am happy that it is in hands the most capable in the world of removing them. If then, dear sir, you will complete your favor by putting the piece into such a state as it may be acted, or of directing me how to do it, I shall ever retain a sense of your goodness to me. And indeed, though most probably this be the last I shall ever write, yet I can't help feeling a secret satisfaction that poets for the future are likely to have a protector who declines taking advantage of their dreadful situation — and scorns that importance which may be acquired by trifling with their anxieties."

The next day Goldsmith wrote to Garrick, who was at Litchfield, informing him of his having transferred his piece to Covent Garden, for which it had been originally written, and by the patentee of which it was claimed, observing, "As I found you had very great difficulties about that piece, I complied with his desire. . . . I am extremely sorry that you should think me warm at our last meeting; your judgment certainly ought to be free, especially in a matter which must in some measure concern your own credit and interest. I assure you, sir, I have no disposition to differ with you on this or any other account, but am, with an high opinion of your abilities, and a very real esteem, sir, your most obedient humble servant. Oliver Goldsmith."

In his reply, Garrick observed, "I was, indeed, much hurt that your warmth at our last meeting mistook my sincere and friendly attention to your play for the remains of a former misunderstanding, which I had as much forgot as if it had never existed. What I said to you at my own house I now repeat, that I felt more pain in giving my sentiments than you possibly would in receiving them. It has been the business, and ever will be, of my life to live on the best terms with men of genius; and I know that Dr. Goldsmith will have no reason to change his previous friendly disposition towards

me, as I shall be glad of every future opportunity to convince him how much I am his obedient servant and well-wisher. D. GARRICK."

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Is Johnson appropriately called the "Great Cham of Literature"?

2. Explain the meaning of the term "poet laureate." Name some of the poets laureate. Are you anticipating that Goldsmith will be chosen poet laureate before his death?

3. Why does not Irving insert the dates of more of Goldsmith's letters which he quotes?

CHAPTER XXI

More Hack-Authorship — Tom Davies and the Roman History — Canonbury Castle — Political Authorship — Pecuniary Temptation — Death of Newbery the Elder.

Though Goldsmith's comedy was now in train to be performed, it could not be brought out before Christmas; in the mean time he must live. Again, therefore, he had to resort to literary jobs for his daily support. These obtained for him petty occasional sums, the largest of which was ten pounds, from the elder Newbery, for an historical compilation; but this scanty rill of quasi patronage, so sterile in its products, was likely soon to cease; Newbery being too ill to attend to business, and having to transfer the whole management of it to his nephew.

At this time Tom Davies, the sometime Roscius, sometime bibliopole, stepped forward to Goldsmith's relief, and proposed that he should undertake an easy popular history of Rome in two volumes. An arrangement was soon made. Goldsmith undertook to complete it in two years, if possible, for two hundred and fifty guineas, and forthwith set about his task with cheerful alacrity. As usual, he sought a rural retreat during the summer months, where he might alternate his literary labors with strolls about the green fields. "Merry Islington" was again his resort, but he now aspired to better quarters than formerly, and engaged the chambers occupied occasionally by Mr. Newbery, in Canonbury House, or Castle, as it is popularly called. This had been a hunting-lodge of Queen Elizabeth, in whose time it was surrounded by parks and forests. In Goldsmith's day, nothing remained of it but an old brick tower; it was still in the country amid

rural scenery, and was a favorite nestling-place of authors, publishers, and others of the literary order.[1] A number of these he had for fellow-occupants of the castle; and they formed a temporary club, which held its meetings at the Crown Tavern, on the Islington lower road; and here he presided in his own genial style, and was the life and delight of the company.

The writer of these pages visited old Canonbury Castle some years since, out of regard to the memory of Goldsmith. The apartment was still shown which the poet had inhabited, consisting of a sitting-room and small bedroom, with panelled wainscots and Gothic windows. The quaintness and quietude of the place were still attractive. It was one of the resorts of citizens on their Sunday walks, who would ascend to the top of the tower and amuse themselves with reconnoitring the city through a telescope. Not far from this tower were the gardens of the White Conduit House, a Cockney Elysium, where Goldsmith used to figure in the humbler days of his fortune. In the first edition of his Essays he speaks of a stroll in these gardens, where he at that time, no doubt, thought himself in perfectly genteel society. After his rise in the world, however, he became too knowing to speak of such plebeian haunts. In a new edition of his Essays, therefore, the White Conduit House and its garden disappears, and he speaks of "a stroll in the Park."

[1] See on the distant slope, majestic shows
Old Canonbury's tower, an ancient pile
To various fates assigned; and where by turns
Meanness and grandeur have alternate reign'd;
Thither, in latter days, hath genius fled
From yonder city, to respire and die.
There the sweet bard of Auburn sat, and tuned
The plaintive moanings of his village dirge.
There learned Chambers treasured lore for *men*,
And Newbery there his A-B-C's for *babes*.

While Goldsmith was literally living from hand to mouth by the forced drudgery of the pen, his independence of spirit was subjected to a sore pecuniary trial. It was the opening of Lord North's administration, a time of great political excitement. The public mind was agitated by the question of American taxation, and other questions of like irritating tendency. Junius and Wilkes and other powerful writers were attacking the administration with all their force; Grub Street was stirred up to its lowest depths; inflammatory talent of all kinds was in full activity, and the kingdom was deluged with pamphlets, lampoons, and libels of the grossest kinds. The ministry were looking anxiously round for literary support. It was thought that the pen of Goldsmith might be readily enlisted. His hospitable friend and countryman, Robert Nugent, politically known as Squire Gawky, had come out strenuously for colonial taxation; had been selected for a lordship of the board of trade, and raised to the rank of Baron Nugent and Viscount Clare. His example, it was thought, would be enough of itself to bring Goldsmith into the ministerial ranks; and then what writer of the day was proof against a full purse or a pension? Accordingly one Parson Scott, chaplain to Lord Sandwich, and author of "Anti Sejanus Panurge," and other political libels in support of the administration, was sent to negotiate with the poet, who at this time was returned to town. Dr. Scott, in after-years, when his political subserviency had been rewarded by two fat crown-livings, used to make what he considered a good story out of this embassy to the poet. "I found him," said he, "in a miserable suit of chambers in the Temple. I told him my authority: I told how I was empowered to pay most liberally for his exertions; and, would you believe it! he was so absurd as to say, 'I can earn as much as will supply my wants without writing for any party; the assistance you offer is therefore unnecessary

to me'; — and so I left him in his garret!" Who does not admire the sturdy independence of poor Goldsmith toiling in his garret for nine guineas the job, and smile with contempt at the indignant wonder of the political divine, albeit his subserviency *was* repaid by two fat crown-livings?

Not long after this occurrence, Goldsmith's old friend, though frugal-handed employer, Newbery, of picture-book renown, closed his mortal career. The poet has celebrated him as the friend of all mankind; he certainly lost nothing by his friendship. He coined the brains of his authors in the times of their exigency, and made them pay dear for the plank put out to keep them from drowning. It is not likely his death caused much lamentation among the scribbling tribe; we may express decent respect for the memory of the just, but we shed tears only at the grave of the generous.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Goldsmith's independence.

2. Tell what Goldsmith gained by spending the summer months mostly in the country.

3. Did Goldsmith take any part in the politics of his time?

CHAPTER XXII

Theatrical Manœuvring — The Comedy of "False Delicacy" — First Performance of "The Good-natured Man" — Conduct of Johnson — Conduct of the Author — Intermeddling of the Press.

The comedy of "The Good-natured Man" was doomed to experience delays and difficulties to the very last. Garrick, notwithstanding his professions, had still a lurking grudge against the author, and tasked his managerial arts to thwart him in his theatrical enterprise. For this purpose he undertook to build up Hugh Kelly, Goldsmith's boon companion of the Wednesday club, as a kind of rival. Kelly had written a comedy called "False Delicacy," in which were embodied all the meretricious qualities of the sentimental school. Garrick, though he had decried that school, and had brought out his comedy of "The Clandestine Marriage" in opposition to it, now lauded "False Delicacy" to the skies, and prepared to bring it out at Drury Lane with all possible stage-effect. He even went so far as to write a prologue and epilogue for it, and to touch up some parts of the dialogue. He had become reconciled to his former colleague, Colman, and it is intimated that one condition in the treaty of peace between these potentates of the realms of pasteboard (equally prone to play into each other's hands with the confederate potentates on the great theatre of life) was, that Goldsmith's play should be kept back until Kelly's had been brought forward.

In the mean time the poor author, little dreaming of the deleterious influence at work behind the scenes, saw the appointed time arrive and pass by without the performance of his play; while "False Delicacy" was brought out at

Drury Lane (January 23, 1768) with all the trickery of managerial management. Houses were packed to applaud it to the echo; the newspapers vied with each other in their venal praises, and night after night seemed to give it a fresh triumph.

While "False Delicacy" was thus borne on the full tide of fictitious prosperity, "The Good-natured Man" was creeping through the last rehearsals at Covent Garden. The success of the rival piece threw a damp upon author, manager, and actors. Goldsmith went about with a face full of anxiety; Colman's hopes in the piece declined at each rehearsal; as to his fellow-proprietors, they declared they had never entertained any. All the actors were discontented with their parts, except Ned Shuter, an excellent low comedian, and a pretty actress named Miss Walford; both of whom the poor author ever afterward held in grateful recollection.

Johnson, Goldsmith's growling monitor and unsparing castigator in times of heedless levity, stood by him at present with that protecting kindness with which he ever befriended him in time of need. He attended the rehearsals; he furnished the prologue according to promise; he pish'd and pshaw'd at any doubts and fears on the part of the author, but gave him sound counsel, and held him up with a steadfast and manly hand. Inspirited by his sympathy, Goldsmith plucked up new heart, and arrayed himself for the grand trial with unusual care. Ever since his elevation into the polite world, he had improved in his wardrobe and toilet. Johnson could no longer accuse him of being shabby in his appearance; he rather went to the other extreme. On the present occasion there is an entry in the books of his tailor, Mr. William Filby, of a suit of "Tyrian bloom, satin grain, and garter blue silk breeches, £8 2s. 7d." Thus magnificently attired, he attended the theatre and watched

the reception of the play, and the effect of each individual scene, with that vicissitude of feeling incident to his mercurial nature.

Johnson's prologue was solemn in itself, and being delivered by Brinsley in lugubrious tones suited to the ghost in "Hamlet," seemed to throw a portentous gloom on the audience. Some of the scenes met with great applause, and at such times Goldsmith was highly elated; others went off coldly, or there were slight tokens of disapprobation, and then his spirits would sink. The fourth act saved the piece; for Shuter, who had the main comic character of Croaker, was so varied and ludicrous in his execution of the scene in which he reads an incendiary letter, that he drew down thunders of applause. On his coming behind the scenes, Goldsmith greeted him with an overflowing heart; declaring that he exceeded his own idea of the character, and made it almost as new to him as to any of the audience.

On the whole, however, both the author and his friends were disappointed at the reception of the piece, and considered it a failure. Poor Goldsmith left the theatre with his towering hopes completely cut down. He endeavored to hide his mortification, and even to assume an air of unconcern while among his associates; but the moment he was alone with Dr. Johnson, in whose rough but magnanimous nature he reposed unlimited confidence, he threw off all restraint and gave way to an almost childlike burst of grief. Johnson, who had shown no want of sympathy at the proper time, saw nothing in the partial disappointment of overrated expectations to warrant such ungoverned emotions, and rebuked him sternly for what he termed a silly affectation, saying that "No man should be expected to sympathize with the sorrows of vanity."

When Goldsmith had recovered from the blow, he, with his usual unreserve, made his past distress a subject of

amusement to his friends. Dining one day, in company with Dr. Johnson, at the chaplain's table at St. James's Palace, he entertained the company with a particular and comic account of all his feelings on the night of representation, and his despair when the piece was hissed. How he went, he said, to the Literary Club; chatted gayly, as if nothing had gone amiss; and, to give a greater idea of his unconcern, sang his favorite song about an old woman tossed in a blanket seventeen times as high as the moon. . . . . "All this while," added he, "I was suffering horrid tortures, and, had I put a bit in my mouth, I verily believe it would have strangled me on the spot, I was so excessively ill; but I made more noise than usual to cover all that; so they never perceived my not eating, nor suspected the anguish of my heart; but when all were gone except Johnson here, I burst out a-crying, and even swore that I would never write again."

Dr. Johnson sat in amaze at the odd frankness and child-like self-accusation of poor Goldsmith. When the latter had come to a pause, "All this, Doctor," said he, dryly, "I thought had been a secret between you and me, and I am sure I would not have said anything about it for the world." But Goldsmith had no secrets: his follies, his weaknesses, his errors were all thrown to the surface; his heart was really too guileless and innocent to seek mystery and concealment. It is too often the false, designing man that is guarded in his conduct and never offends proprieties.

It is singular, however, that Goldsmith, who thus in conversation could keep nothing to himself, should be the author of a maxim which would inculcate the most thorough dissimulation. "Men of the world," says he in one of the papers of the "Bee," "maintain that the true end of speech is not so much to express our wants as to conceal them." How often is this quoted as one of the subtle remarks of the fine-witted Talleyrand!

"The Good-natured Man" was performed for ten nights in succession; the third, sixth, and ninth nights were for the author's benefit; the fifth night it was commanded by their Majesties; after this it was played occasionally, but rarely, having always pleased more in the closet than on the stage.

As to Kelly's comedy, Johnson pronounced it entirely devoid of character, and it has long since passed into oblivion. Yet it is an instance how an inferior production, by dint of puffing and trumpeting, may be kept up for a time on the surface of popular opinion, or rather of popular talk. What had been done for "False Delicacy" on the stage was continued by the press. The booksellers vied with the manager in launching it upon the town. They announced that the first impression of three thousand copies was exhausted before two o'clock on the day of publication; four editions, amounting to ten thousand copies, were sold in the course of the season; a public breakfast was given to Kelly at the Chapter Coffee-House, and a piece of plate presented to him by the publishers. The comparative merits of the two plays were continually subjects of discussion in green-rooms, coffee-houses, and other places where theatrical questions were discussed.

Goldsmith's old enemy, Kenrick, that "viper of the press," endeavored on this, as on many other occasions, to detract from his well-earned fame; the poet was excessively sensitive to these attacks, and had not the art and self-command to conceal his feelings.

Some scribblers on the other side insinuated that Kelly had seen the manuscript of Goldsmith's play, while in the hands of Garrick or elsewhere, and had borrowed some of the situations and sentiments. Some of the wags of the day took a mischievous pleasure in stirring up a feud between the two authors. Goldsmith became nettled, though he could

scarcely be deemed jealous of one so far his inferior. He spoke disparagingly, though no doubt sincerely, of Kelly's play: the latter retorted. Still, when they met one day behind the scenes of Covent Garden, Goldsmith, with his customary urbanity, congratulated Kelly on his success. "If I thought you sincere, Mr. Goldsmith," replied the other, abruptly, "I should thank you." Goldsmith was not a man to harbor spleen or ill-will, and soon laughed at this unworthy rivalship; but the jealousy and envy awakened in Kelly's mind long continued. He is even accused of having given vent to his hostility by anonymous attacks in the newspapers, the basest resource of dastardly and malignant spirits; but of this there is no positive proof.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Character of Garrick as brought out by Irving. Is this a just historical estimate?

2. What does Irving mean by calling Goldsmith's nature mercurial?

3. Mention the difficulties and the delays attending the first presentation of Goldsmith's play, "The Good-natured Man." Compare the first performance of this play with the first presentation of "Hernani" in Paris. [Talk over the matter with your teacher of French or modern languages.]

4. Who were Kelly and Kenrick?

5. Goldsmith's ingenuousness among his friends.

CHAPTER XXIII

Burning the Candle at both Ends — Fine Apartments — Fine Furniture — Fine Clothes — Fine Acquaintances — Shoemaker's Holiday and Jolly-Pigeon Associates — Peter Barlow, Glover, and the Hampstead Hoax — Poor Friends among great Acquaintances.

The profits resulting from "The Good-natured Man" were beyond any that Goldsmith had yet derived from his works. He netted about four hundred pounds from the theatre, and one hundred pounds from his publisher.

Five hundred pounds! and all at one miraculous draught! It appeared to him wealth inexhaustible. It at once opened his heart and hand, and led him into all kinds of extravagance. The first symptom was ten guineas sent to Shuter for a box-ticket for his benefit, when "The Good-natured Man" was to be performed. The next was an entire change in his domicil. The shabby lodgings with Jeffs, the butler, in which he had been worried by Johnson's scrutiny, were now exchanged for chambers more becoming a man of his ample fortune. The apartments consisted of three rooms on the second floor of No. 2 Brick Court, Middle Temple, on the right hand ascending the staircase, and overlooked the umbrageous walks of the Temple garden. The lease he purchased for £400, and then went on to furnish his rooms with mahogany sofas, card-tables, and bookcases; with curtains, mirrors, and Wilton carpets. His awkward little person was also furnished out in a style befitting his apartment; for, in addition to his suit of "Tyrian bloom, satin grain," we find another charged about this time, in the books of Mr. Filby, in no less gorgeous terms, being "lined with silk and furnished with gold buttons." Thus lodged and thus arrayed, he invited the visits of his most aristocratic acquaintances,

and no longer quailed beneath the courtly eye of Beauclerc. He gave dinners to Johnson, Reynolds, Percy, Bickerstaff, and other friends of note; and supper-parties to young folks of both sexes. These last were preceded by round games of cards, at which there was more laughter than skill, and in which the sport was to cheat each other; or by romping games of forfeits and blind-man's-buff, at which he enacted the lord of misrule. Blackstone, whose chambers were immediately below, and who was studiously occupied on his "Commentaries," used to complain of the racket made overhead by his revelling neighbor.

Sometimes Goldsmith would make up a rural party, composed of four or five of his "jolly-pigeon" friends, to enjoy what he humorously called a "shoemaker's holiday." These would assemble at his chambers in the morning, to partake of a plentiful and rather expensive breakfast; the remains of which, with his customary benevolence, he generally gave to some poor woman in attendance. The repast ended, the party would set out on foot, in high spirits, making extensive rambles by foot-paths and green lanes to Blackheath, Wandsworth, Chelsea, Hampton Court, Highgate, or some other pleasant resort, within a few miles of London. A simple but gay and heartily relished dinner, at a country inn, crowned the excursion. In the evening they strolled back to town, all the better in health and spirits for a day spent in rural and social enjoyment. Occasionally, when extravagantly inclined, they adjourned from dinner to drink tea at the White Conduit House; and, now and then, concluded their festive day by supping at the Grecian or Temple Exchange Coffee-Houses, or at the Globe Tavern, in Fleet Street. The whole expenses of the day never exceeded a crown, and were oftener from three and sixpence to four shillings; for the best part of their entertainment, sweet air and rural scenes, excellent exercise and joyous conversation, cost nothing.

One of Goldsmith's humble companions, on these excursions, was his occasional amanuensis, Peter Barlow, whose quaint peculiarities afforded much amusement to the company. Peter was poor but punctilious, squaring his expenses according to his means. He always wore the same garb; fixed his regular expenditure for dinner at a trifling sum, which, if left to himself, he never exceeded, but which he always insisted on paying. His oddities always made him a welcome companion on the "shoemaker's holidays." The dinner, on these occasions, generally exceeded considerably his tariff; he put down, however, no more than his regular sum, and Goldsmith made up the difference.

Another of these hangers-on, for whom, on such occasions, he was content to "pay the shot," was his countryman Glover, of whom mention has already been made as one of the wags and sponges of the Globe and Devil taverns, and a prime mimic at the Wednesday Club.

This vagabond genius has bequeathed us a whimsical story of one of his practical jokes upon Goldsmith, in the course of a rural excursion in the vicinity of London. They had dined at an inn on Hampstead Heights, and were descending the hill, when, in passing a cottage, they saw through the open window a party at tea. Goldsmith, who was fatigued, cast a wistful glance at the cheerful tea-table. "How I should like to be of that party," exclaimed he. "Nothing more easy," replied Glover; "allow me to introduce you." So saying, he entered the house with an air of the most perfect familiarity, though an utter stranger, and was followed by the unsuspecting Goldsmith, who supposed, of course, that he was a friend of the family. The owner of the house rose on the entrance of the strangers. The undaunted Glover shook hands with him in the most cordial manner possible, fixed his eye on one of the company who had a peculiarly good-natured physiognomy, muttered something like a recognition,

and forthwith launched into an amusing story, invented at the moment, of something which he pretended had occurred upon the road. The host supposed the new-comers were friends of his guests; the guests, that they were friends of the host. Glover did not give them time to find out the truth. He followed one droll story with another; brought his powers of mimicry into play, and kept the company in a roar. Tea was offered and accepted; an hour went off in the most sociable manner imaginable, at the end of which Glover bowed himself and his companion out of the house with many facetious last words, leaving the host and his company to compare notes, and to find out what an impudent intrusion they had experienced.

Nothing could exceed the dismay and vexation of Goldsmith when triumphantly told by Glover that it was all a hoax, and that he did not know a single soul in the house. His first impulse was to return instantly and vindicate himself from all participation in the jest; but a few words from his free-and-easy companion dissuaded him. "Doctor," said he, coolly, "we are unknown; you quite as much as I; if you return and tell the story, it will be in the newspapers to-morrow; nay, upon recollection, I remember in one of their offices the face of that squinting fellow who sat in the corner as if he was treasuring up my stories for future use, and we shall be sure of being exposed; let us therefore keep our own counsel."

This story was frequently afterward told by Glover, with rich dramatic effect, repeating and exaggerating the conversation, and mimicking, in ludicrous style, the embarrassment, surprise, and subsequent indignation of Goldsmith.

It is a trite saying that a wheel cannot run in two ruts; nor a man keep two opposite sets of intimates. Goldsmith sometimes found his old friends of the "jolly-pigeon" order turning up rather awkwardly when he was in company with

his new aristocratic acquaintances. He gave a whimsical account of the sudden apparition of one of them at his gay apartments in the Temple, who may have been a welcome visitor at his squalid quarters in Green Arbor Court. "How do you think he served me?" said he to a friend. "Why, sir, after staying away two years, he came one evening into my chambers, half drunk, as I was taking a glass of wine with Topham Beauclerc and General Oglethorpe; and sitting himself down, with most intolerable assurance inquired after my health and literary pursuits, as if we were upon the most friendly footing. I was at first so much ashamed of ever having known such a fellow, that I stifled my resentment, and drew him into a conversation on such topics as I knew he could talk upon; in which, to do him justice, he acquitted himself very reputably; when all of a sudden, as if recollecting something, he pulled two papers out of his pocket, which he presented to me with great ceremony, saying, 'Here, my dear friend, is a quarter of a pound of tea, and a half pound of sugar, I have brought you; for though it is not in my power at present to pay you the two guineas you so generously lent me, you, nor any man else, shall ever have it to say that I want gratitude.' This," added Goldsmith, "was too much. I could no longer keep in my feelings, but desired him to turn out of my chambers directly; which he very coolly did, taking up his tea and sugar; and I never saw him afterwards."

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Using the details given in Irving and filling out where necessary from your imagination, write an account of a "shoemaker's holiday" on some specific date. [Let Goldsmith be the central personage in the rural excursion about which you write.]

2. Compare one of the scenes in "The Vicar of Wakefield" with the Glover jest.

CHAPTER XXIV

Reduced again to Book-building — Rural Retreat at Shoemaker's Paradise — Death of Henry Goldsmith; Tributes to his Memory in the "Deserted Village."

The heedless expenses of Goldsmith, as may easily be supposed, soon brought him to the end of his "prize-money," but when his purse gave out he drew upon futurity, obtaining advances from his booksellers and loans from his friends in the confident hope of soon turning up another trump. The debts which he thus thoughtlessly incurred in consequence of a transient gleam of prosperity embarrassed him for the rest of his life; so that the success of the "Good-natured Man" may be said to have been ruinous to him.

He was soon obliged to resume his old craft of book-building, and set about his "History of Rome," undertaken for Davies.

It was his custom, as we have shown, during the summer-time, when pressed by a multiplicity of literary jobs, or urged to the accomplishment of some particular task, to take country lodgings a few miles from town, generally on the Harrow or Edgeware roads, and bury himself there for weeks and months together. Sometimes he would remain closely occupied in his room, at other times he would stroll out along the lanes and hedgerows, and taking out paper and pencil, note down thoughts to be expanded and connected at home. His summer retreat for the present year, 1768, was a little cottage with a garden, pleasantly situated about eight miles from town on the Edgeware road. He took it in conjunction with a Mr. Edmund Botts, a barrister and man of letters, his neighbor in the Temple, having

rooms immediately opposite him on the same floor. They had become cordial intimates, and Botts was one of those with whom Goldsmith now and then took the friendly but pernicious liberty of borrowing.

The cottage which they had hired belonged to a rich shoemaker of Piccadilly, who had embellished his little domain of half an acre with statues, and jets, and all the decorations of landscape gardening; in consequence of which Goldsmith gave it the name of The Shoemaker's Paradise. As his fellow-occupant, Mr. Botts, drove a gig, he sometimes, in an interval of literary labor, accompanied him to town, partook of a social dinner there, and returned with him in the evening. On one occasion, when they had probably lingered too long at the table, they came near breaking their necks on their way homeward by driving against a post on the side-walk, while Botts was proving by the force of legal eloquence that they were in the very middle of the broad Edgeware road.

In the course of this summer, Goldsmith's career of gayety was suddenly brought to a pause by intelligence of the death of his brother Henry, then but forty-five years of age. He had led a quiet and blameless life amid the scenes of his youth, fulfilling the duties of village pastor with unaffected piety; conducting the school at Lissoy with a degree of industry and ability that gave it celebrity, and acquitting himself in all the duties of life with undeviating rectitude and the mildest benevolence. How truly Goldsmith loved and venerated him is evident in all his letters and throughout his works; in which his brother continually forms his model for an exemplification of all the most endearing of the Christian virtues; yet his affection at his death was embittered by the fear that he died with some doubt upon his mind of the warmth of his affection. Goldsmith had been urged by his friends in Ireland, since his elevation in the

world, to use his influence with the great, which they supposed to be all-powerful, in favor of Henry, to obtain for him church-preferment. He did exert himself as far as his diffident nature would permit, but without success; we have seen that, in the case of the Earl of Northumberland, when, as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, that nobleman proffered him his patronage, he asked nothing for himself, but only spoke on behalf of his brother. Still some of his friends, ignorant of what he had done and of how little he was able to do, accused him of negligence. It is not likely, however, that his amiable and estimable brother joined in the accusation.

To the tender and melancholy recollections of his early days awakened by the death of this loved companion of his childhood, we may attribute some of the most heartfelt passages in his "Deserted Village." Much of that poem we are told was composed this summer, in the course of solitary strolls about the green lanes and beautifully rural scenes of the neighborhood; and thus much of the softness and sweetness of English landscape became blended with the ruder features of Lissoy. It was in these lonely and subdued moments, when tender regret was half mingled with self-upbraiding, that he poured forth that homage of the heart rendered as it were at the grave of his brother. The picture of the village pastor in this poem, which we have already hinted was taken in part from the character of his father, embodied likewise the recollections of his brother Henry; for the natures of the father and son seem to have been identical. In the following lines, however, Goldsmith evidently contrasted the quiet settled life of his brother, passed at home in the benevolent exercise of the Christian duties, with his own restless vagrant career: —

> "Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
> Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change his place."

To us the whole character seems traced as it were in an expiatory spirit; as if, conscious of his own wandering restlessness, he sought to humble himself at the shrine of excellence which he had not been able to practise: —

"At church with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorn'd the venerable place;
Truth from his lips prevail'd with double sway,
And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray.
The service past, around the pious man,
With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran;
Even children follow'd, with endearing wile,
And pluck'd his gown, to share the good man's smile:
His ready smile a parent's warmth express'd,
Their welfare pleas'd him, and their cares distress'd;
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven.

. . . . . .

And, as a bird each fond endearment tries
To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reprov'd each dull delay,
Allur'd to brighter worlds, *and led the way*."

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Irving again calls Goldsmith heedless. Why is the adjective a good characterization?

2. Henry Goldsmith's life and character. How much older was Henry than Oliver? In what points of character did they differ?

CHAPTER XXV

Dinner at Bickerstaff's — Hiffernan and his Impecuniosity — Kenrick's Epigram — Johnson's Consolation — Goldsmith's Toilet — The Bloom-colored Coat — New Acquaintances; The Hornecks — A Touch of Poetry and Passion — The Jessamy Bride.

In October, Goldsmith returned to town and resumed his usual haunts. We hear of him at a dinner given by his countryman, Isaac Bickerstaff, author of "Love in a Village," "Lionel and Clarissa," and other successful dramatic pieces. The dinner was to be followed by the reading by Bickerstaff of a new play. Among the guests was one Paul Hiffernan, likewise an Irishman; somewhat idle and intemperate; who lived nobody knew how nor where, sponging wherever he had a chance, and often of course upon Goldsmith, who was ever the vagabond's friend, or rather victim. Hiffernan was something of a physician, and elevated the emptiness of his purse into the dignity of a disease, which he termed *impecuniosity*, and against which he claimed a right to call for relief from the healthier purses of his friends. He was a scribbler for the newspapers, and latterly a dramatic critic, which had probably gained him an invitation to the dinner and reading. The wine and wassail, however, befogged his senses. Scarce had the author got into the second act of his play, when Hiffernan began to nod, and at length snored outright. Bickerstaff was embarrassed, but continued to read in a more elevated tone. The louder he read, the louder Hiffernan snored; until the author came to a pause. "Never mind the brute, Bick, but go on," cried Goldsmith. "He would have served Homer just so if he were here and reading his own works."

Kenrick, Goldsmith's old enemy, travestied this anecdote in the following lines, pretending that the poet had compared his countryman Bickerstaff to Homer.

> "What are your Bretons, Romans, Grecians,
> Compared with thorough-bred Milesians!
> Step into Griffin's shop, he'll tell ye
> Of Goldsmith, Bickerstaff, and Kelly . . .
> And, take one Irish evidence for t' other,
> Ev'n Homer's self is but their foster-brother."

Johnson was a rough consoler to a man when wincing under an attack of this kind. "Never mind, sir," said he to Goldsmith, when he saw that he felt the sting. "A man whose business it is to be talked of is much helped by being attacked. Fame, sir, is a shuttlecock; if it be struck only at one end of the room, it will soon fall to the ground; to keep it up, it must be struck at both ends."

Bickerstaff, at the time of which we are speaking, was in high vogue, the associate of the first wits of the day; a few years afterwards he was obliged to fly the country to escape the punishment of an infamous crime. Johnson expressed great astonishment at hearing the offence for which he had fled. "Why, sir?" said Thrale, "he had long been a suspected man." Perhaps there was a knowing look on the part of the eminent brewer, which provoked a somewhat contemptuous reply. "By those who look close to the ground," said Johnson, "dirt will sometimes be seen; I hope I see things from a greater distance."

We have already noticed the improvement, or rather the increased expense, of Goldsmith's wardrobe since his elevation into polite society. "He was fond," says one of his contemporaries, "of exhibiting his muscular little person in the gayest apparel of the day, to which was added a bag-wig and sword." Thus arrayed, he used to figure about in the

sunshine in the Temple Gardens, much to his own satisfaction, but to the amusement of his acquaintances.

Boswell, in his memoirs, has rendered one of his suits forever famous. That worthy, on the 16th of October in this same year, gave a dinner to Johnson, Goldsmith, Reynolds, Garrick, Murphy, Bickerstaff, and Davies. Goldsmith was generally apt to bustle in at the last moment, when the guests were taking their seats at table; but on this occasion he was unusually early. While waiting for some lingerers to arrive, "he strutted about," says Boswell, "bragging of his dress, and I believe was seriously vain of it, for his mind was undoubtedly prone to such impressions. 'Come, come,' said Garrick, 'talk no more of that. You are perhaps the worst — eh, eh?' Goldsmith was eagerly attempting to interrupt him, when Garrick went on, laughing ironically. 'Nay, you will always *look* like a gentleman; but I am talking of your being *well* or *ill dressed*.' 'Well, let me tell you,' said Goldsmith, 'when the tailor brought home my bloom-colored coat, he said, "Sir, I have a favor to beg of you; when anybody asks you who made your clothes, be pleased to mention John Filby, at the Harrow, in Water Lane."' 'Why, sir,' cried Johnson, 'that was because he knew the strange color would attract crowds to gaze at it, and thus they might hear of him, and see how well he could make a coat of so absurd a color.'"

But though Goldsmith might permit this raillery on the part of his friends, he was quick to resent any personalities of the kind from strangers. As he was one day walking the Strand in grand array with bag-wig and sword, he excited the merriment of two coxcombs, one of whom called to the other to "look at that fly with a long pin stuck through it." Stung to the quick, Goldsmith's first retort was to caution the passers-by to be on their guard against "that brace of disguised pickpockets," — his next was to step into the

middle of the street, where there was room for action, half-draw his sword, and beckon the joker, who was armed in like manner, to follow him. This was literally a war of wit which the other had not anticipated. He had no inclination to push the joke to such an extreme, but abandoning the ground, sneaked off with his brother wag amid the hootings of the spectators.

This proneness to finery in dress, however, which Boswell and others of Goldsmith's contemporaries, who did not understand the secret plies of his character, attributed to vanity, arose, we are convinced, from a widely different motive. It was from a painful idea of his own personal defects, which had been cruelly stamped upon his mind in his boyhood, by the sneers and jeers of his playmates, and had been ground deeper into it by rude speeches made to him in every step of his struggling career, until it had become a constant cause of awkwardness and embarrassment. This he had experienced the more sensibly since his reputation had elevated him into polite society; and he was constantly endeavoring by the aid of dress to acquire that personal *acceptability*, if we may use the phrase, which nature had denied him. If ever he betrayed a little self-complacency on first turning out in a new suit, it may, perhaps, have been because he felt as if he had achieved a triumph over his ugliness.

There were circumstances too, about the time of which we are treating, which may have rendered Goldsmith more than usually attentive to his personal appearance. He had recently made the acquaintance of a most agreeable family from Devonshire, which he met at the house of his friend, Sir Joshua Reynolds. It consisted of Mrs. Horneck, widow of Captain Kane Horneck; two daughters, seventeen and nineteen years of age; and an only son, Charles, *the Captain in Lace*, as his sisters playfully and somewhat proudly called

him, he having lately entered the Guards. The daughters are described as uncommonly beautiful, intelligent, sprightly, and agreeable. Catharine, the eldest, went among her friends by the name of *Little Comedy*, indicative, very probably, of her disposition. She was engaged to William Henry Bunbury, second son of a Suffolk baronet. The hand and heart of her sister Mary were yet unengaged, although she bore the by-name among her friends of the *Jessamy Bride*. This family was prepared, by their intimacy with Reynolds and his sister, to appreciate the merits of Goldsmith. The poet had always been a chosen friend of the eminent painter; and Miss Reynolds, as we have shown, ever since she had heard his poem of "The Traveller" read aloud, had ceased to consider him ugly. The Hornecks were equally capable of forgetting his person in admiring his works. On becoming acquainted with him, too, they were delighted with his guileless simplicity, his buoyant good-nature, and his innate benevolence; and an enduring intimacy soon sprang up between them. For once poor Goldsmith had met with polite society with which he was perfectly at home, and by which he was fully appreciated; for once he had met with lovely women, to whom his ugly features were not repulsive. A proof of the easy and playful terms in which he was with them, remains in a whimsical epistle in verse, of which the following was the occasion. A dinner was to be given to their family by a Dr. Baker, a friend of their mother's, at which Reynolds and Angelica Kauffman were to be present. The young ladies were eager to have Goldsmith of the party, and their intimacy with Dr. Baker allowing them to take the liberty, they wrote a joint invitation to the poet at the last moment. It came too late, and drew from him the following reply; on the top of which was scrawled, "This *is* a poem! This *is* a copy of verses!"

"Your mandate I got,
You may all go to pot;
Had your senses been right,
You 'd have sent before night:
So tell Horneck and Nesbitt,
And Baker and his bit,
And Kauffman beside,
And the *Jessamy Bride*,
With the rest of the crew,
The Reynoldses too,
Little Comedy's face,
And the *Captain in Lace*, —
Tell each other to rue
Your Devonshire crew,
For sending so late
To one of my state.
But 't is Reynolds's way
From wisdom to stray,
And Angelica's whim
To befrolic like him;
But alas! your good worships, how could they be wiser,
When both have been spoil'd in to-day's 'Advertiser'?"[1]

It has been intimated that the intimacy of poor Goldsmith with the Miss Hornecks, which began in so sprightly a vein, gradually assumed something of a more tender nature, and that he was not insensible to the fascinations of the younger sister. This may account for some of the phenomena which about this time appeared in his wardrobe and toilet. During the first year of his acquaintance with these lovely girls, the tell-tale book of his tailor, Mr. William Filby, displays entries of four or five full suits, besides separate articles of dress. Among the items we find a green half-trimmed frock and breeches, lined with silk; a queen's-blue dress suit; a half-dress suit of ratteen, lined with satin; a pair of silk stocking-breeches, and another pair of a bloom-color. Alas!

[1] The following lines had appeared in that day's "Advertiser," on the portrait of Sir Joshua by Angelica Kauffman: —

"While fair Angelica, with matchless grace,
Paints Conway's burly form and Stanhope's face;
Our hearts to beauty willing homage pay,
We praise, admire, and gaze our souls away.
But when the likeness she hath done for thee,
O Reynolds! with astonishment we see,
Forced to submit, with all our pride we own,
Such strength, such harmony excelled by none,
And thou art rivalled by thyself alone."

poor Goldsmith! how much of this silken finery was dictated, not by vanity, but humble consciousness of thy defects; how much of it was to atone for the uncouthness of thy person, and to win favor in the eyes of the Jessamy Bride!

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Goldsmith's fondness for odd clothes.

2. The story of Goldsmith and the Jessamy Bride. What recent writer of fiction has made this love story the theme of a novel?

3. Irving as an apologist for Goldsmith's shortcomings. [Compare question 4, Chapter XVIII.]

4. Give an account of Boswell's dinner to his friends on October 16, 1768.

CHAPTER XXVI

Goldsmith in the Temple — Judge Day and Grattan — Labor and Dissipation — Publication of the Roman History; Opinions of it — "History of Animated Nature" — Temple Rookery — Anecdotes of a Spider.

In the winter of 1768–69 Goldsmith occupied himself at his quarters in the Temple, slowly "building up" his Roman History. We have pleasant views of him in this learned and half-cloistered retreat of wits and lawyers and legal students, in the reminiscences of Judge Day of the Irish Bench, who in his advanced age delighted to recall the days of his youth, when he was a templar, and to speak of the kindness with which he and his fellow-student, Grattan, were treated by the poet. "I was just arrived from college," said he, "full freighted with academic gleanings, and our author did not disdain to receive from me some opinions and hints towards his Greek and Roman histories. Being then a young man, I felt much flattered by the notice of so celebrated a person. He took great delight in the conversation of Grattan, whose brilliancy in the morning of life furnished full earnest of the unrivalled splendor which awaited his meridian; and finding us dwelling together in Essex Court, near himself, where he frequently visited my immortal friend, his warm heart became naturally prepossessed towards the associate of one whom he so much admired."

The Judge goes on, in his reminiscences, to give a picture of Goldsmith's social habits, similar in style to those already furnished. He frequented much the Grecian Coffee-House, then the favorite resort of the Irish and Lancashire Templars. He delighted in collecting his friends around him at evening parties at his chambers, where he entertained

them with a cordial and unostentatious hospitality. "Occasionally," adds the Judge, "he amused them with his flute, or with whist, neither of which he played well, particularly the latter, but, on losing his money, he never lost his temper. In a run of bad luck and worse play, he would fling his cards upon the floor and exclaim, '*Byefore* George, I ought forever to renounce thee, fickle, faithless fortune.'"

The Judge was aware, at the time, that all the learned labor of poor Goldsmith upon his Roman History was mere hack-work to recruit his exhausted finances. "His purse replenished," adds he, "by labors of this kind, the season of relaxation and pleasure took its turn, in attending the theatres, Ranelagh, Vauxhall, and other scenes of gayety and amusement. Whenever his funds were dissipated, — and they fled more rapidly from being the dupe of many artful persons, male and female, who practised upon his benevolence, — he returned to his literary labors, and shut himself up from society to provide fresh matter for his bookseller, and fresh supplies for himself."

How completely had the young student discerned the characteristics of poor, genial, generous, drudging, holiday-loving Goldsmith; toiling, that he might play; earning his bread by the sweat of his brains, and then throwing it out of the window.

The Roman History was published in the middle of May, in two volumes of five hundred pages each. It was brought out without parade or pretension, and was announced as for the use of schools and colleges; but, though a work written for bread, not fame, such is its ease, perspicuity, good sense, and the delightful simplicity of its style, that it was well received by the critics, commanded a prompt and extensive sale, and has ever since remained in the hands of young and old.

Johnson, who, as we have before remarked, rarely praised or dispraised things by halves, broke forth in a warm eulogy

of the author and the work, in a conversation with Boswell, to the great astonishment of the latter. "Whether we take Goldsmith," said he, "as a poet, as a comic writer, or as an historian, he stands in the first class." Boswell. — "An historian! My dear sir, you surely will not rank his compilation of the Roman History with the works of other historians of this age." Johnson. — "Why, who are before him?" Boswell. — "Hume — Robertson — Lord Lyttelton." Johnson (his antipathy against the Scotch beginning to rise). — "I have not read Hume; but doubtless Goldsmith's History is better than the verbiage of Robertson, or the foppery of Dalrymple." Boswell. — "Will you not admit the superiority of Robertson, in whose history we find such penetration, such painting?" Johnson. — "Sir, you must consider how that penetration and that painting are employed. It is not history, it is imagination. He who describes what he never saw, draws from fancy. Robertson paints minds as Sir Joshua paints faces, in a history-piece; he imagines an heroic countenance. You must look upon Robertson's work as romance, and try it by that standard. History it is not. Besides, sir, it is the great excellence of a writer to put into his book as much as his book will hold. Goldsmith has done this in his History. Now Robertson might have put twice as much in his book. Robertson is like a man who has packed gold in wool; the wool takes up more room than the gold. No, sir, I always thought Robertson would be crushed with his own weight — would be buried under his own ornaments. Goldsmith tells you shortly all you want to know; Robertson detains you a great deal too long. No man will read Robertson's cumbrous detail a second time; but Goldsmith's plain narrative will please again and again. I would say to Robertson what an old tutor of a college said to one of his pupils, 'Read over your compositions, and whenever you meet with a passage which you think is particularly fine, strike it out!'

Goldsmith's abridgment is better than that of Lucius Florus or Eutropius; and I will venture to say, that, if you compare him with Vertot in the same places of the Roman History, you will find that he excels Vertot. Sir, he has the art of compiling, and of saying everything he has to say in a pleasing manner. He is now writing a Natural History, and will make it as entertaining as a Persian tale."

The Natural History to which Johnson alluded was the "History of Animated Nature," which Goldsmith commenced in 1769, under an engagement with Griffin, the bookseller, to complete it as soon as possible in eight volumes, each containing upwards of four hundred pages, in pica; a hundred guineas to be paid to the author on the delivery of each volume in manuscript.

He was induced to engage in this work by the urgent solicitations of the booksellers, who had been struck by the sterling merits and captivating style of an introduction which he wrote to Brookes's "Natural History." It was Goldsmith's intention originally to make a translation of Pliny, with a popular commentary; but the appearance of Buffon's work induced him to change his plan, and make use of that author for a guide and model.

Cumberland, speaking of this work, observes: "Distress drove Goldsmith upon undertakings neither congenial with his studies nor worthy of his talents. I remember him when, in his chambers in the Temple, he showed me the beginning of his 'Animated Nature'; it was with a sigh, such as genius draws when hard necessity diverts it from its bent to drudge for bread, and talk of birds, and beasts, and creeping things, which Pidock's showman would have done as well. Poor fellow, he hardly knows an ass from a mule, nor a turkey from a goose, but when he sees it on the table."

Others of Goldsmith's friends entertained similar ideas with respect to his fitness for the task, and they were apt

now and then to banter him on the subject, and to amuse themselves with his easy credulity. The custom among the natives of Otaheite of eating dogs being once mentioned in company, Goldsmith observed that a similar custom prevailed in China; that a dog-butcher is as common there as any other butcher; and that, when he walks abroad, all the dogs fall on him. Johnson. — "That is not owing to his killing dogs; sir, I remember a butcher at Litchfield, whom a dog that was in the house where I lived always attacked. It is the smell of carnage which provokes this, let the animals he has killed be what they may." Goldsmith. — "Yes, there is a general abhorrence in animals at the signs of massacre. If you put a tub full of blood into a stable, the horses are likely to go mad." Johnson. — "I doubt that." Goldsmith. — "Nay, sir, it is a fact well authenticated." Thrale. — "You had better prove it before you put it into your book on Natural History. You may do it in my stable if you will." Johnson. — "Nay, sir, I would not have him prove it. If he is content to take his information from others, he may get through his book with little trouble, and without much endangering his reputation. But if he makes experiments for so comprehensive a book as his, there would be no end to them; his erroneous assertions would fall then upon himself; and he might be blamed for not having made experiments as to every particular."

Johnson's original prediction, however, with respect to this work, that Goldsmith would make it as entertaining as a Persian tale, was verified; and though much of it was borrowed from Buffon, and but little of it written from his own observation, — though it was by no means profound, and was chargeable with many errors, yet the charms of his style and the play of his happy disposition throughout have continued to render it far more popular and readable than many works on the subject of much greater scope and

science. Cumberland was mistaken, however, in his notion of Goldsmith's ignorance and lack of observation as to the characteristics of animals. On the contrary, he was a minute and shrewd observer of them; but he observed them with the eye of a poet and moralist as well as a naturalist. We quote two passages from his works illustrative of this fact, and we do so the more readily because they are in a manner a part of his history, and give us another peep into his private life in the Temple, — of his mode of occupying himself in his lonely and apparently idle moments, and of another class of acquaintances which he made there.

Speaking in his "Animated Nature" of the habitudes of Rooks, "I have often amused myself," says he, "with observing their plans of policy from my window in the Temple, that looks upon a grove, where they have made a colony in the midst of a city. At the commencement of spring the rookery, which during the continuance of winter seemed to have been deserted, or only guarded by about five or six, like old soldiers in a garrison, now begins to be once more frequented, and in a short time all the bustle and hurry of business will be fairly commenced."

The other passage, which we take the liberty to quote at some length, is from an admirable paper in the "Bee," and relates to the House-Spider.

"Of all the solitary insects I have ever remarked, the spider is the most sagacious, and its motions to me, who have attentively considered them, seem almost to exceed belief. . . . I perceived, about four years ago, a large spider in one corner of my room making its web; and, though the maid frequently levelled her broom against the labors of the little animal, I had the good fortune then to prevent its destruction, and I may say it more than paid me by the entertainment it afforded.

"In three days the web was, with incredible diligence, completed; nor could I avoid thinking that the insect seemed to exult in its new abode. It frequently traversed it round, examined the strength of every part of it, retired into its hole, and came out very frequently. The first enemy, however, it had to encounter was another and a much larger spider, which, having no web of its own, and having probably exhausted all its stock in former labors of this kind, came to invade the property of its neighbor. Soon, then, a terrible encounter ensued, in which the invader seemed to have the victory, and the laborious spider was obliged to take refuge in its hole. Upon this I perceived the victor using every art to draw the enemy from its stronghold. He seemed to go off, but quickly returned; and when he found all arts in vain, began to demolish the new web without mercy. This brought on another battle, and, contrary to my expectations, the laborious spider became conqueror, and fairly killed his antagonist.

"Now, then, in peaceable possession of what was justly its own, it waited three days with the utmost impatience, repairing the breaches of its web, and taking no sustenance that I could perceive. At last, however, a large blue fly fell into the snare, and struggled hard to get loose. The spider gave it leave to entangle itself as much as possible, but it seemed to be too strong for the cobweb. I must own I was greatly surprised when I saw the spider immediately sally out, and in less than a minute weave a new net round its captive, by which the motion of its wings was stopped; and, when it was fairly hampered in this manner, it was seized and dragged into the hole.

"In this manner it lived, in a precarious state; and Nature seemed to have fitted it for such a life, for upon a single fly it subsisted for more than a week. I once put a wasp into the net; but when the spider came out in order

to seize it as usual, upon perceiving what kind of an enemy it had to deal with, it instantly broke all the bands that held it fast, and contributed all that lay in its power to disengage so formidable an antagonist. When the wasp was set at liberty, I expected the spider would have set about repairing the breaches that were made in its net; but those, it seems, were irreparable; wherefore the cobweb was now entirely forsaken, and a new one begun, which was completed in the usual time.

"I had now a mind to try how many cobwebs a single spider could furnish; wherefore I destroyed this, and the insect set about another. When I destroyed the other also, its whole stock seemed entirely exhausted, and it could spin no more. The arts it made use of to support itself, now deprived of its great means of subsistence, were indeed surprising. I have seen it roll up its legs like a ball, and lie motionless for hours together, but cautiously watching all the time; when a fly happened to approach sufficiently near, it would dart out all at once, and often seize its prey.

"Of this life, however, it soon began to grow weary, and resolved to invade the possession of some other spider, since it could not make a web of its own. It formed an attack upon a neighboring fortification with great vigor, and at first was as vigorously repulsed. Not daunted, however, with one defeat, in this manner it continued to lay siege to another's web for three days, and at length, having killed the defendant, actually took possession. When smaller flies happen to fall into the snare, the spider does not sally out at once, but very patiently waits till it is sure of them; for, upon his immediately approaching, the terror of his appearance might give the captive strength sufficient to get loose; the manner, then, is to wait patiently, till, by ineffectual and impotent struggles, the captive has wasted all its strength, and then he becomes a certain and easy conquest.

"The insect I am now describing lived three years; every year it changed its skin and got a new set of legs. I have sometimes plucked off a leg, which grew again in two or three days. At first it dreaded my approach to its web, but at last it became so familiar as to take a fly out of my hand; and, upon my touching any part of the web, would immediately leave its hole, prepared either for a defence or an attack."

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. What was a Templar in the time of Goldsmith? In the time of Richard the Lion-Hearted? Is the term used now in the United States?

2. How many adjectives can be applied to Goldsmith in describing his character?

3. Was the tutor's advice to one of his pupils sound?

4. By observation verify Goldsmith's remarks about the spider. [Find out from your science teacher whether Goldsmith's paper in the "Bee" regarding the House-Spider is scientifically accurate.]

5. Write a short essay on Vauxhall.

CHAPTER XXVII

Honors at the Royal Academy — Letter to his Brother Maurice — Family Fortunes — Jane Contarine and the Miniature — Portraits and Engravings — School Associations — Johnson and Goldsmith in Westminster Abbey.

The latter part of the year 1768 had been made memorable in the world of taste by the institution of the Royal Academy of Arts, under the patronage of the King, and the direction of forty of the most distinguished artists. Reynolds, who had been mainly instrumental in founding it, had been unanimously elected president, and had thereupon received the honor of knighthood.[1] Johnson was so delighted with his friend's elevation, that he broke through a rule of total abstinence with respect to wine, which he had maintained for several years, and drank bumpers on the occasion. Sir Joshua eagerly sought to associate his old and valued friends with him in his new honors, and it is supposed to be through his suggestions that, on the first establishment of professorships, which took place in December, 1769, Johnson was nominated to that of Ancient Literature, and Goldsmith to that of History. They were mere honorary titles, without emolument, but gave distinction, from the noble institution to which they appertained. They also gave the possessors honorable places at the annual banquet, at which were assembled many of the most distinguished persons of rank and talent, all proud to be classed among the patrons of the arts.

[1] We must apologize for the anachronism we have permitted ourselves in the course of this memoir, in speaking of Reynolds as *Sir Joshua*, when treating of circumstances which occurred prior to his being dubbed; but it is so customary to speak of him by that title, that we found it difficult to dispense with it.

The following letter of Goldsmith to his brother alludes to the foregoing appointment, and to a small legacy bequeathed to him by his uncle Contarine.

"*To Mr. Maurice Goldsmith, at James Lawder's, Esq., at Kilmore, near Carrick-on-Shannon.*

"January, 1770.

"DEAR BROTHER, — I should have answered your letter sooner, but, in truth, I am not fond of thinking of the necessities of those I love, when it is so very little in my power to help them. I am sorry to find you are every way unprovided for; and what adds to my uneasiness is, that I have received a letter from my sister Johnson, by which I learn that she is pretty much in the same circumstances. As to myself, I believe I think I could get both you and my poor brother-in-law something like that which you desire, but I am determined never to ask for little things, nor exhaust any little interest I may have, until I can serve you, him, and myself more effectually. As yet, no opportunity has offered; but I believe you are pretty well convinced that I will not be remiss when it arrives.

"The King has lately been pleased to make me professor of Ancient History in the royal academy of painting which he has just established, but there is no salary annexed; and I took it rather as a compliment to the Institution than any benefit to myself. Honors to one in my situation are something like ruffles to one that wants a shirt.

"You tell me that there are fourteen or fifteen pounds left me in the hands of my cousin Lawder, and you ask me what I would have done with them. My dear brother, I would by no means give any directions to my dear worthy relations at Kilmore how to dispose of money which is, properly speaking, more theirs than mine. All that I can say is, that I entirely, and this letter will serve to witness,

give up any right and title to it; and I am sure they will dispose of it to the best advantage. To them I entirely leave it; whether they or you may think the whole necessary to fit you out, or whether our poor sister Johnson may not want the half, I leave entirely to their and your discretion. The kindness of that good couple to our shattered family demands our sincerest gratitude; and, though they have almost forgotten me, yet, if good things at last arrive, I hope one day to return and increase their good-humor by adding to my own.

"I have sent my cousin Jenny a miniature picture of myself, as I believe it is the most acceptable present I can offer. I have ordered it to be left for her at George Faulkner's, folded in a letter. The face, you well know, is ugly enough, but it is finely painted. I will shortly also send my friends over the Shannon some mezzotinto prints of myself, and some more of my friends here, such as Burke, Johnson, Reynolds, and Colman. I believe I have written a hundred letters to different friends in your country, and never received an answer to any of them. I do not know how to account for this, or why they are unwilling to keep up for me those regards which I must ever retain for them.

"If, then, you have a mind to oblige me, you will write often, whether I answer you or not. Let me particularly have the news of our family and old acquaintances. For instance, you may begin by telling me about the family where you reside, how they spend their time, and whether they ever make mention of me. Tell me about my mother, my brother Hodson and his son, my brother Harry's son and daughter, my sister Johnson, the family of Ballyoughter, what is become of them, where they live, and how they do. You talked of being my only brother: I don't understand you. Where is Charles? A sheet of paper occasionally

filled with the news of this kind would make me very happy, and would keep you nearer my mind. As it is, my dear brother, believe me to be Yours most affectionately,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

By this letter we find the Goldsmiths the same shifting, shiftless race as formerly; a "shattered family," scrambling on each other's back as soon as any rise above the surface. Maurice is "every way unprovided for"; living upon cousin Jane and her husband; and, perhaps, amusing himself by hunting otter in the river Inny. Sister Johnson and her husband are as poorly off as Maurice, with, perhaps, no one at hand to quarter themselves upon; as to the rest, "what is become of them? where do they live? and how do they do? what has become of Charles?" What forlorn haphazard life is implied by these questions! Can we wonder that, with all the love for his native place, which is shown throughout Goldsmith's writings, he had not the heart to return there? Yet his affections are still there. He wishes to know whether the Lawders (which means his cousin Jane, his early Valentine) ever made mention of him; he sends Jane his miniature; he believes "it is the most acceptable present he can offer"; he evidently, therefore, does not believe she has almost forgotten him, although he intimates that he does: in his memory she is still Jane Contarine, as he last saw her, when he accompanied her harpsichord with his flute. Absence, like death, sets a seal on the image of those we have loved; we cannot realize the intervening changes which time may have effected.

As to the rest of Goldsmith's relatives, he abandons his legacy of fifteen pounds, to be shared among them. It is all he has to give. His heedless improvidence is eating up the pay of the booksellers in advance. With all his literary success, he has neither money nor influence; but he has

empty fame, and he is ready to participate with them; he is honorary professor, without pay; his portrait is to be engraved in mezzotint, in company with those of his friends, Burke, Reynolds, Johnson, Colman, and others, and he will send prints of them to his friends over the Channel, though they may not have a house to hang them up in. What a motley letter! How indicative of the motley character of the writer! By the by, the publication of a splendid mezzotinto engraving of his likeness by Reynolds was a great matter of glorification to Goldsmith, especially as it appeared in such illustrious company. As he was one day walking the streets in a state of high elation, from having just seen it figuring in the print-shop windows, he met a young gentleman with a newly married wife hanging on his arm, whom he immediately recognized for Master Bishop, one of the boys he had petted and treated with sweetmeats when a humble usher at Milner's school. The kindly feelings of old times revived, and he accosted him with cordial familiarity, though the youth may have found some difficulty in recognizing in the personage, arrayed, perhaps, in garments of Tyrian dye, the dingy pedagogue of the Milners. "Come, my boy," cried Goldsmith, as if still speaking to a schoolboy, — "come, Sam, I am delighted to see you. I must treat you to something — what shall it be? Will you have some apples?" glancing at an old woman's stall; then, recollecting the print-shop window: "Sam," said he, "have you seen my picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds? Have you seen it, Sam? Have you got an engraving?" Bishop was caught; he equivocated; he had not yet bought it; but he was furnishing his house, and had fixed upon the place where it was to be hung. "Ah, Sam!" rejoined Goldsmith reproachfully, "if your picture had been published, I should not have waited an hour without having it."

After all, it was honest pride, not vanity, in Goldsmith, that was gratified at seeing his portrait deemed worthy of being perpetuated by the classic pencil of Reynolds, and "hung up in history" beside that of his revered friend Johnson. Even the great moralist himself was not insensible to a feeling of this kind. Walking one day with Goldsmith, in Westminster Abbey, among the tombs of monarchs, warriors, and statesmen, they came to the sculptured mementos of literary worthies in poets' corner. Casting his eye round upon these memorials of genius, Johnson muttered in a low tone to his companion, —

"Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur istis."

Goldsmith treasured up the intimated hope, and shortly afterwards, as they were passing by Temple Bar, where the heads of Jacobite rebels, executed for treason, were mouldering aloft on spikes, pointed up to the grizzly mementos, and echoed the intimation,

"Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur *istis*."

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Character of the Goldsmiths as presented in Oliver's letter to Maurice.

2. Was it honest pride or vanity that made Goldsmith glad to have Reynolds paint his portrait? What are the most striking characteristics of this portrait? [See frontispiece.]

3. When was Joshua Reynolds knighted?

4. Describe the poets' corner in Westminster Abbey. [See diagram of the Abbey in Karl Baedeker's "London and Its Environs," § 19. On the numerous maps of London in Baedeker's guide-book will be found most of the places referred to in Irving's "Life of Goldsmith."]

CHAPTER XXVIII

Publication of the "Deserted Village"; Notices and Illustrations of it.

Several years had now elapsed since the publication of "The Traveller," and much wonder was expressed that the great success of that poem had not excited the author to further poetic attempts. On being questioned at the annual dinner of the Royal Academy by the Earl of Lisburn, why he neglected the Muses to compile histories and write novels, "My Lord," replied he, "by courting the Muses I shall starve, but by my other labors I eat, drink, have good clothes, and can enjoy the luxuries of life." So, also, on being asked by a poor writer what was the most profitable mode of exercising the pen, — "My dear fellow," replied he, good-humoredly, "pay no regard to the draggle-tailed Muses; for my part I have found productions in prose much more sought after and better paid for."

Still, however, as we have heretofore shown, he found sweet moments of dalliance to steal away from his prosaic toils, and court the Muse among the green lanes and hedge-rows in the rural environs of London, and on the 26th of May, 1770, he was enabled to bring his "Deserted Village" before the public.

The popularity of "The Traveller" had prepared the way for this poem, and its sale was instantaneous and immense. The first edition was immediately exhausted; in a few days a second was issued; in a few days more a third, and by the 16th of August the fifth edition was hurried through the press. As is the case with popular writers, he had become his own rival, and critics were inclined to give the preference to his first poem; but with the public at large we believe

the "Deserted Village" has ever been the greatest favorite. Previous to its publication the bookseller gave him in advance a note for the price agreed upon, one hundred guineas. As the latter was returning home he met a friend to whom he mentioned the circumstance, and who, apparently judging of poetry by quantity rather than quality, observed that it was a great sum for so small a poem. "In truth," said Goldsmith, "I think so too; it is much more than the honest man can afford or the piece is worth. I have not been easy since I received it." In fact, he actually returned the note to the bookseller, and left it to him to graduate the payment according to the success of the work. The bookseller, as may well be supposed, soon repaid him in full with many acknowledgments of his disinterestedness. This anecdote has been called in question, we know not on what grounds; we see nothing in it incompatible with the character of Goldsmith, who was very impulsive, and prone to acts of inconsiderate generosity.

As we do not pretend in this summary memoir to go into a criticism or analysis of any of Goldsmith's writings, we shall not dwell upon the peculiar merits of this poem; we cannot help noticing, however, how truly it is a mirror of the author's heart, and of all the fond pictures of early friends and early life forever present there. It seems to us as if the very last accounts received from home, of his "shattered family," and the desolation that seemed to have settled upon the haunts of his childhood, had cut to the roots one feebly cherished hope, and produced the following exquisitely tender and mournful lines: —

> "In all my wand'rings round this world of care,
> In all my griefs — and God has giv'n my share —
> I still had hopes my latest hours to crown,
> Amid these humble bowers to lay me down;
> To husband out life's taper at the close,
> And keep the flame from wasting by repose;

I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,
Amid the swains to show my book-learn'd skill,
Around my fire an ev'ning group to draw,
And tell of all I felt and all I saw;
And as a hare, whom hounds and horns pursue,
Pants to the place from whence at first she flew;
I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
Here to return — *and die at home at last.*"

How touchingly expressive are the succeeding lines, wrung from a heart which all the trials and temptations and buffetings of the world could not render worldly; which, amid a thousand follies and errors of the head, still retained its child-like innocence; and which, doomed to struggle on to the last amidst the din and turmoil of the metropolis, had ever been cheating itself with a dream of rural quiet and seclusion: —

"Oh bless'd retirement! friend to life's decline,
Retreats from care, *that never must be mine*,
How blest is he who crowns, in shades like these,
A youth of labor with an age of ease;
Who quits a world where strong temptations try
And, since 't is hard to combat, learns to fly!
For him no wretches, born to work and weep,
Explore the mine, or tempt the dangerous deep;
No surly porter stands, in guilty state,
To spurn imploring famine from the gate;
But on he moves to meet his latter end,
Angels around befriending virtue's friend;
Sinks to the grave with unperceived decay,
While resignation gently slopes the way;
And all his prospects brightening to the last,
His heaven commences ere the world be past.'

Note

The following article, which appeared in a London periodical, shows the effect of Goldsmith's poem in renovating the fortunes of Lissoy.

"About three miles from Ballymahon, a very central town in the sister-kingdom, is the mansion and village of Auburn, so called by their present possessor, Captain Hogan. Through the taste and improvement of this gentleman, it is now a beautiful spot, although fifteen years since it presented a very bare and unpoetical aspect. This, however, was owing to a cause which serves strongly to corroborate the assertion, that Goldsmith had this scene in view when he wrote his poem of 'The Deserted Village.' The then possessor, General Napier, turned all his tenants out of their farms that he might enclose them in his own private domain. Littleton, the mansion of the General, stands not far off, a complete emblem of the desolating spirit lamented by the poet, dilapidated and converted into a barrack.

"The chief object of attraction is Lissoy, once the parsonage-house of Henry Goldsmith, that brother to whom the poet dedicated his 'Traveller,' and who is represented as a village pastor,

"'Passing rich with forty pounds a year.'

"When I was in the country, the lower chambers were inhabited by pigs and sheep, and the drawing-rooms by oats. Captain Hogan, however, has, I believe, got it since into his possession, and has, of course, improved its condition.

"Though at first strongly inclined to dispute the identity of Auburn, Lissoy House overcame my scruples. As I clambered over the rotten gate, and crossed the grass-grown lawn or court, the tide of association became too strong for casuistry: here the poet dwelt and wrote, and here his thoughts fondly recurred when composing his 'Traveller' in a foreign land. Yonder was the decent church, that literally 'topped the neighboring hill.' Before me lay the little hill of Knockrue, on which he declares, in one of his letters, he had rather sit with a book in hand than mingle

in the proudest assemblies. And, above all, startlingly true, beneath my feet was

> "'Yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
> And still where many a garden-flower grows wild.'

"A painting from the life could not be more exact. 'The stubborn currant-bush' lifts its head above the rank grass, and the proud hollyhock flaunts where its sisters of the flower-knot are no more.

"In the middle of the village stands the old 'hawthorn-tree,' built up with masonry to distinguish and preserve it; it is old and stunted, and suffers much from the depredations of post-chaise travellers, who generally stop to procure a twig. Opposite to it is the village alehouse, over the door of which swings 'The Three Jolly Pigeons.' Within, everything is arranged according to the letter: —

> "'The whitewash'd wall, the nicely-sanded floor,
> The varnish'd clock that click'd behind the door:
> The chest, contrived a double debt to pay,
> A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day;
> The pictures placed for ornament and use,
> The twelve good rules, the royal game of goose.'

"Captain Hogan, I have heard, found great difficulty in obtaining 'the twelve good rules,' but at length purchased them at some London bookstall to adorn the whitewashed parlor of 'The Three Jolly Pigeons.' However laudable this may be, nothing shook my faith in the reality of Auburn so much as this exactness, which had the disagreeable air of being got up for the occasion. The last object of pilgrimage is the quondam habitation of the schoolmaster,

> "'There, in his noisy mansion, skill'd to rule.'

It is surrounded with fragrant proofs of identity in

> "'The blossom'd furze, unprofitably gay.'

There is to be seen the chair of the poet, which fell into the hands of its present possessors at the wreck of the parsonage-house; they have frequently refused large offers of purchase; but more, I dare say, for the sake of drawing contributions from the curious than from any reverence for the bard. The chair is of oak, with back and seat of cane, which precluded all hopes of a secret drawer, like that lately discovered in Gay's. There is no fear of its being worn out by the devout earnestness of sitters — as the cocks and hens have usurped undisputed possession of it, and protest most clamorously against all attempts to get it cleansed or to seat one's self.

"The controversy concerning the identity of this Auburn was formerly a standing theme of discussion among the learned of the neighborhood; but, since the *pros* and *cons* have been all ascertained, the argument has died away. Its abettors plead the singular agreement between the local history of the place and the Auburn of the poem, and the exactness with which the scenery of the one answers to the description of the other. To this is opposed the mention of the nightingale,

> "'And fill'd each pause the nightingale had made';

there being no such bird in the island. The objection is slighted, on the other hand, by considering the passage as a mere poetical license. 'Besides,' say they, 'the robin is the Irish nightingale.' And if it be hinted how unlikely it was that Goldsmith should have laid the scene in a place from which he was and had been so long absent, the rejoinder is always, 'Pray, sir, was Milton in hell when he built Pandemonium?'

"The line is naturally drawn between; there can be no doubt that the poet intended England by

> "'The land to hast'ning ills a prey,
> Where wealth accumulates and men decay.'

But it is very natural to suppose that, at the same time, his imagination had in view the scenes of his youth, which give such strong features of resemblance to the picture."

Best, an Irish clergyman, told Davis, the traveller in America, that the hawthorn-bush mentioned in the poem was still remarkably large. "I was riding once," said he, "with Brady, titular Bishop of Ardagh, when he observed to me, 'Ma foy Best, this huge overgrown bush is mightily in the way. I will order it to be cut down.'—'What, sir!' replied I, 'cut down the bush that supplies so beautiful an image in "The Deserted Village"?'—'Ma foy!' exclaimed the bishop, 'is that the hawthorn-bush? Then let it be sacred from the edge of the axe, and evil be to him that should cut off a branch.'"—The hawthorn-bush, however, has long since been cut up, root and branch, in furnishing relics to literary pilgrims.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Goldsmith's reason for writing prose hack-work rather than poetical efforts of lasting merit.

2. Which poem do you like better, "The Traveller" or "The Deserted Village"? Why?

3. Why does Irving call his work a "summary memoir"?

4. What does Goldsmith mean in "The Deserted Village" by his statement that for the man who retires to rural seclusion "heaven commences ere the world be past"? [Compare a similar idea in the early part of "The Vision of Sir Launfal."]

5. What is Irving's purpose in appending the note to Chapter XXVIII? Do you think that Auburn has been sufficiently identified? Are you convinced that Lissoy was the original of Auburn? Does it make any difference whether Lissoy was the original or not?

CHAPTER XXIX

The Poet among the Ladies; Description of his Person and Manners — Expedition to Paris with the Horneck Family — The Traveller of Twenty and the Traveller of Forty — Hickey, the Special Attorney — An unlucky Exploit.

The "Deserted Village" had shed an additional poetic grace round the homely person of the author; he was becoming more and more acceptable in ladies' eyes, and finding himself more and more at ease in their society; at least in the society of those whom he met in the Reynolds circle, among whom he particularly affected the beautiful family of the Hornecks.

But let us see what were really the looks and manners of Goldsmith about this time, and what right he had to aspire to ladies' smiles; and in so doing let us not take the sketches of Boswell and his compeers, who had a propensity to represent him in caricature; but let us take the apparently truthful and discriminating picture of him as he appeared to Judge Day, when the latter was a student in the Temple.

"In person," says the Judge, "he was short; about five feet five or six inches; strong, but not heavy in make; rather fair in complexion, with brown hair; such, at least, as could be distinguished from his wig. His features were plain, but not repulsive, — certainly not so when lighted up by conversation. His manners were simple, natural, and perhaps on the whole, we may say, not polished; at least without the refinement and good-breeding which the exquisite polish of his compositions would lead us to expect. He was always cheerful and animated, often, indeed, boisterous in his mirth; entered with spirit into convivial society; contributed largely to its enjoyments by solidity of information,

and the naïveté and originality of his character; talked often without premeditation, and laughed loudly without restraint."

This, it will be recollected, represents him as he appeared to a young Templar, who probably saw him only in Temple coffee-houses, at students' quarters, or at the jovial supper-parties given at the poet's own chambers. Here, of course, his mind was in its rough dress; his laugh may have been loud and his mirth boisterous; but we trust all these matters became softened and modified when he found himself in polite drawing-rooms and in female society.

But what say the ladies themselves of him; and here, fortunately, we have another sketch of him, as he appeared at the time to one of the Horneck circle; in fact, we believe, to the Jessamy Bride herself. After admitting, apparently, with some reluctance, that "he was a very plain man," she goes on to say, "but had he been much more so, it was impossible not to love and respect his goodness of heart, which broke out on every occasion. His benevolence was unquestionable, and *his countenance bore every trace of it:* no one that knew him intimately could avoid admiring and loving his good qualities." When to all this we add the idea of intellectual delicacy and refinement associated with him by his poetry and the newly-plucked bays that were flourishing round his brow, we cannot be surprised that fine and fashionable ladies should be proud of his attentions, and that even a young beauty should not be altogether displeased with the thoughts of having a man of his genius in her chains.

We are led to indulge some notions of the kind from finding him in the month of July, but a few weeks after the publication of the "Deserted Village," setting off on a six weeks' excursion to Paris, in company with Mrs. Horneck and her two beautiful daughters. A day or two before his departure, we find another new gala suit charged to him on the books of Mr. William Filby. Were the bright eyes of the Jessamy

Bride responsible for this additional extravagance of wardrobe? Goldsmith had recently been editing the works of Parnell; had he taken courage from the example of Edwin in the Fairy tale? —

> "Yet spite of all that nature did
> To make his uncouth form forbid,
> This creature dared to love.
> He felt the force of Edith's eyes,
> Nor wanted hope to gain the prize
> *Could ladies look within*"——

All this we throw out as mere hints and surmises, leaving it to our readers to draw their own conclusions. It will be found, however, that the poet was subjected to shrewd bantering among his contemporaries about the beautiful Mary Horneck, and that he was extremely sensitive on the subject.

It was in the month of June that he set out for Paris with his fair companions, and the following letter was written by him to Sir Joshua Reynolds, soon after the party landed at Calais.

"My Dear Friend, —

"We had a very quick passage from Dover to Calais, which we performed in three hours and twenty minutes, all of us extremely sea-sick, which must necessarily have happened, as my machine to prevent sea-sickness was not completed. We were glad to leave Dover, because we hated to be imposed upon; so were in high spirits at coming to Calais, where we were told that a little money would go a great way.

"Upon landing, with two little trunks, which was all we carried with us, we were surprised to see fourteen or fifteen fellows all running down to the ship to lay their hands upon them; four got under each trunk, the rest surrounded and held the hasps; and in this manner our little baggage was conducted, with a kind of funeral solemnity, till it was safely

lodged at the custom-house. We were well enough pleased with the people's civility till they came to be paid; every creature that had the happiness of but touching our trunks with their finger expected sixpence; and they had so pretty and civil a manner of demanding it, that there was no refusing them.

"When we had done with the porters, we had next to speak with the custom-house officers, who had their pretty civil way too. We were directed to the Hôtel d'Angleterre, where a valet-de-place came to offer his service, and spoke to me ten minutes before I once found out that he was speaking English. We had no occasion for his services, so we gave him a little money because he spoke English, and because he wanted it. I cannot help mentioning another circumstance: I bought a new riband for my wig at Canterbury, and the barber at Calais broke it in order to gain sixpence by buying me a new one."

An incident which occurred in the course of this tour has been tortured by that literary magpie, Boswell, into a proof of Goldsmith's absurd jealousy of any admiration shown to others in his presence. While stopping at a hotel in Lisle, they were drawn to the windows by a military parade in front. The extreme beauty of the Miss Hornecks immediately attracted the attention of the officers, who broke forth with enthusiastic speeches and compliments intended for their ears. Goldsmith was amused for a while, but at length affected impatience at this exclusive admiration of his beautiful companions, and exclaimed, with mock severity of aspect, "Elsewhere I also would have my admirers."

It is difficult to conceive the obtuseness of intellect necessary to misconstrue so obvious a piece of mock petulance and dry humor into an instance of mortified vanity and jealous self-conceit.

Goldsmith jealous of the admiration of a group of gay officers for the charms of two beautiful young women! This even out-Boswells Boswell; yet this is but one of several similar absurdities, evidently misconceptions of Goldsmith's peculiar vein of humor, by which the charge of envious jealousy has been attempted to be fixed upon him. In the present instance it was contradicted by one of the ladies herself, who was annoyed that it had been advanced against him. "I am sure," said she, "from the peculiar manner of his humor, and assumed frown of countenance, what was often uttered in jest was mistaken, by those who did not know him, for earnest." No one was more prone to err on this point than Boswell. He had a tolerable perception of wit, but none of humor.

The following letter to Sir Joshua Reynolds was subsequently written.

"*To Sir Joshua Reynolds.*

"Paris, July 29, [1770.]

"My dear Friend, — I began a long letter to you from Lisle, giving a description of all that we had done and seen, but, finding it very dull, and knowing that you would show it again, I threw it aside and it was lost. You see by the top of this letter that we are at Paris, and (as I have often heard you say) we have brought our own amusement with us, for the ladies do not seem to be very fond of what we have yet seen.

"With regard to myself, I find that travelling at twenty and forty are very different things. I set out with all my confirmed habits about me, and can find nothing on the Continent so good as when I formerly left it. One of our chief amusements here is scolding at everything we meet with, and praising everything and every person we left at home. You may judge, therefore, whether your name is

not frequently bandied at table among us. To tell you the truth, I never thought I could regret your absence so much as our various mortifications on the road have often taught me to do. I could tell you of disasters and adventures without number; of our lying in barns, and of my being half poisoned with a dish of green peas; of our quarrelling with postilions, and being cheated by our landladies; but I reserve all this for a happy hour which I expect to share with you upon my return.

"I have little to tell you more, but that we are at present all well, and expect returning when we have stayed out one month, which I did not care if it were over this very day. I long to hear from you all, how you yourself do, how Johnson, Burke, Dyer, Chamier, Colman, and every one of the club do. I wish I could send you some amusement in this letter, but I protest I am so stupefied by the air of this country (for I am sure it cannot be natural) that I have not a word to say. I have been thinking of the plot of a comedy, which shall be entitled 'A Journey to Paris,' in which a family shall be introduced with a full intention of going to France to save money. You know there is not a place in the world more promising for that purpose. As for the meat of this country, I can scarce eat it; and though we pay two good shillings a head for our dinner, I find it all so tough that I have spent less time with my knife than my picktooth. I said this as a good thing at the table, but it was not understood. I believe it to be a good thing.

"As for our intended journey to Devonshire, I find it out of my power to perform it; for, as soon as I arrive at Dover, I intend to let the ladies go on, and I will take a country-lodging somewhere near that place in order to do some business. I have so outrun the constable that I must mortify a little to bring it up again. For God's sake, the night you receive this, take your pen in your hand and tell me something

about yourself and myself, if you know anything that has happened. About Miss Reynolds, about Mr. Bickerstaff, my nephew, or anybody that you regard. I beg you will send to Griffin the bookseller to know if there be any letters left for me, and be so good as to send them to me at Paris. They may perhaps be left for me at the Porter's Lodge, opposite the pump in Temple Lane. The same messenger will do. I expect one from Lord Clare, from Ireland. As for the others, I am not much uneasy about.

"Is there anything I can do for you at Paris? I wish you would tell me. The whole of my own purchases here is one silk coat, which I have put on, and which makes me look like a fool. But no more of that. I find that Colman has gained his lawsuit. I am glad of it. I suppose you often meet. I will soon be among you, better pleased with my situation at home than I ever was before. And yet I must say, that, if anything could make France pleasant, the very good women with whom I am at present would certainly do it. I could say more about that, but I intend showing them the letter before I send it away. What signifies teazing you longer with moral observations, when the business of my writing is over? I have one thing only more to say, and of that I think every hour in the day, namely, that I am your most sincere and most affectionate friend,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"Direct to me at the Hotel de Danemarc,
Rue Jacob, Fauxbourg St. Germains."

A word of comment on this letter: —

Travelling is, indeed, a very different thing with Goldsmith the poor student at twenty, and Goldsmith the poet and Professor at forty. At twenty, though obliged to trudge on foot from town to town, and country to country, paying for a supper and a bed by a tune on the flute, everything pleased, everything was good; a truckle-bed in a garret was

a couch of down, and the homely fare of the peasant a feast fit for an epicure. Now, at forty, when he posts through the country in a carriage, with fair ladies by his side, everything goes wrong: he has to quarrel with postilions, he is cheated by landladies, the hotels are barns, the meat is too tough to be eaten, and he is half poisoned by green peas! A line in his letter explains the secret: "the ladies do not seem to be very fond of what we have seen." "One of our chief amusements is scolding at everything we meet with, and praising everything and every person we have left at home!"—the true English travelling amusement. Poor Goldsmith! he has "all his *confirmed habits* about him"; that is to say, he has recently risen into high life, and acquired high-bred notions; he must be fastidious like his fellow-travellers; he dare not be pleased with what pleased the vulgar tastes of his youth. He is unconsciously illustrating the trait so humorously satirized by him in Ned Tibbs, the shabby beau, who can find "no such dressing as he had at Lord Crump's or Lady Crimp's"; whose very senses have grown genteel, and who no longer "smacks at wretched wine or praises detestable custard." A lurking thorn, too, is worrying him throughout this tour; he has "outrun the constable"; that is to say, his expenses have outrun his means, and he will have to make up for this butterfly flight by toiling like a grub on his return.

Another circumstance contributes to mar the pleasure he had promised himself in this excursion. At Paris the party is unexpectedly joined by a Mr. Hickey, a bustling attorney, who is well acquainted with that metropolis and its environs, and insists on playing the cicerone on all occasions. He and Goldsmith do not relish each other, and they have several petty altercations. The lawyer is too much a man of business and method for the careless poet, and is disposed to manage everything. He has perceived Goldsmith's

whimsical peculiarities without properly appreciating his merits, and is prone to indulge in broad bantering and raillery at his expense, particularly irksome if indulged in presence of the ladies. He makes himself merry on his return to England, by giving the following anecdote as illustrative of Goldsmith's vanity: —

"Being with a party at Versailles, viewing the water-works, a question arose among the gentlemen present, whether the distance from whence they stood to one of the little islands was within the compass of a leap. Goldsmith maintained the affirmative; but, being bantered on the subject, and remembering his former prowess as a youth, attempted the leap, but, falling short, descended into the water, to the great amusement of the company."

Was the Jessamy Bride a witness of this unlucky exploit?

This same Hickey is the one of whom Goldsmith, some time subsequently, gave a good-humored sketch, in his poem of "The Retaliation."

"Here Hickey reclines, a most blunt, pleasant creature,
And slander itself must allow him good-nature;
He cherish'd his friend, and he relish'd a bumper,
Yet one fault he had, and that one was a thumper.
Perhaps you may ask if the man was a miser;
I answer, No, no, for he always was wiser;
Too courteous, perhaps, or obligingly flat?
His very worst foe can't accuse him of that;
Perhaps he confided in men as they go,
And so was too foolishly honest? Ah, no!
Then what was his failing? Come, tell it, and burn ye —
He was, could he help it? a special attorney."

One of the few remarks extant made by Goldsmith during his tour is the following, of whimsical import, in his "Animated Nature."

"In going through the towns of France, some time since, I could not help observing how much plainer their parrots

spoke than ours, and how very distinctly I understood their parrots speak French, when I could not understand our own, though they spoke my native language. I at first ascribed it to the different qualities of the two languages, and was for entering into an elaborate discussion on the vowels and consonants; but a friend that was with me solved the difficulty at once, by assuring me that the French women scarce did anything else the whole day than sit and instruct their feathered pupils; and that the birds were thus distinct in their lessons in consequence of continual schooling."

His tour does not seem to have left in his memory the most fragrant recollections; for, being asked, after his return, whether travelling on the Continent repaid "an Englishman for the privations and annoyances attendant on it," he replied, "I recommend it by all means to the sick, if they are without the sense of *smelling*, and to the poor if they are without the sense of *feeling*, and to both if they can discharge from their minds all idea of what in England we term comfort."

It is needless to say that the universal improvement in the art of living on the Continent has at the present day taken away the force of Goldsmith's reply, though even at the time it was more humorous than correct.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. The appearance and manners of Goldsmith about 1770.

2. What conclusions do you draw from Irving's hints in this chapter?

3. Why does Irving call Boswell a literary magpie?

4. What is the difference between wit and humor? Do you find either in Irving's biography of Goldsmith?

5. Was it good etiquette for Reynolds to show Goldsmith's letters?

6. Anecdotes of Goldsmith's trip to the Continent in 1770.

CHAPTER XXX

Death of Goldsmith's Mother — Biography of Parnell — Agreement with Davies for the History of Rome — Life of Bolingbroke — The Haunch of Venison.

On his return to England, Goldsmith received the melancholy tidings of the death of his mother. Notwithstanding the fame as an author to which he had attained, she seems to have been disappointed in her early expectations from him. Like others of his family, she had been more vexed by his early follies than pleased by his proofs of genius; and in subsequent years, when he had risen to fame and to intercourse with the great, had been annoyed at the ignorance of the world and want of management, which prevented him from pushing his fortune. He had always, however, been an affectionate son, and in the latter years of her life, when she had become blind, contributed from his precarious resources to prevent her from feeling want.

He now resumed the labors of the pen, which his recent excursion to Paris rendered doubly necessary. We should have mentioned a "Life of Parnell," published by him shortly after the "Deserted Village." It was, as usual, a piece of job-work, hastily got up for pocket-money. Johnson spoke slightingly of it, and the author himself thought proper to apologize for its meagreness, — yet, in so doing, used a simile, which for beauty of imagery and felicity of language is enough of itself to stamp a value upon the essay.

"Such," says he, "is the very unpoetical detail of the life of a poet. Some dates and some few facts, scarcely more interesting than those that make the ornaments of a country tombstone, are all that remain of one whose labors now

begin to excite universal curiosity. A poet, while living, is seldom an object sufficiently great to attract much attention; his real merits are known but to a few, and these are generally sparing in their praises. When his fame is increased by time, it is then too late to investigate the peculiarities of his disposition; *the dews of morning are past, and we vainly try to continue the chase by the meridian splendor.*"

He now entered into an agreement with Davies to prepare an abridgment, in one volume duodecimo, of his "History of Rome"; but first to write a work for which there was a more immediate demand. Davies was about to republish Lord Bolingbroke's "Dissertation on Parties," which he conceived would be exceedingly applicable to the affairs of the day, and make a probable *hit* during the existing state of violent political excitement; to give it still greater effect and currency, he engaged Goldsmith to introduce it with a prefatory life of Lord Bolingbroke.

About this time Goldsmith's friend and countryman, Lord Clare, was in great affliction, caused by the death of his only son, Colonel Nugent, and stood in need of the sympathies of a kind-hearted friend. At his request, therefore, Goldsmith paid him a visit at his seat of Gosfield, taking his tasks with him. Davies was in a worry lest Gosfield Park should prove a Capua to the poet, and the time be lost. "Dr. Goldsmith," writes he to a friend, "has gone with Lord Clare into the country, and I am plagued to get the proofs from him of the 'Life of Lord Bolingbroke.'" The proofs, however, were furnished in time for the publication of the work in December. The "Biography," though written during a time of political turmoil, and introducing a work intended to be thrown into the arena of politics, maintained that freedom from party prejudice observable in all the writings of Goldsmith. It was a selection of facts, drawn from many unreadable sources, and arranged into a

clear, flowing narrative, illustrative of the career and character of one who, as he intimates, "seemed formed by Nature to take delight in struggling with opposition; whose most agreeable hours were passed in storms of his own creating; whose life was spent in a continual conflict of politics, and as if that was too short for the combat, has left his memory as a subject of lasting contention." The sum received by the author for this memoir is supposed, from circumstances, to have been forty pounds.

Goldsmith did not find the residence among the great unattended with mortifications. He had now become accustomed to be regarded in London as a literary lion, and was annoyed at what he considered a slight on the part of Lord Camden. He complained of it on his return to town at a party of his friends. "I met him," said he, "at Lord Clare's house in the country; and he took no more notice of me than if I had been an ordinary man." "The company," says Boswell, "laughed heartily at this piece of 'diverting simplicity.'" And foremost among the laughers was doubtless the rattle-pated Boswell. Johnson, however, stepped forward, as usual, to defend the poet, whom he would allow no one to assail but himself; perhaps in the present instance he thought the dignity of literature itself involved in the question. "Nay, gentlemen," roared he, "Dr. Goldsmith is in the right. A nobleman ought to have made up to such a man as Goldsmith, and I think it is much against Lord Camden that he neglected him."

After Goldsmith's return to town he received from Lord Clare a present of game, which he has celebrated and perpetuated in his amusing verses entitled the "Haunch of Venison." Some of the lines pleasantly set forth the embarrassment caused by the appearance of such an aristocratic delicacy in the humble kitchen of a poet, accustomed to look up to mutton as a treat: —

"Thanks, my lord, for your venison; for finer or fatter
Never rang'd in a forest, or smok'd in a platter:
The haunch was a picture for painters to study,
The fat was so white, and the lean was so ruddy;
Though my stomach was sharp, I could scarce help regretting
To spoil such a delicate picture by eating:
I had thought in my chambers to place it in view,
To be shown to my friends as a piece of virtu;
As in some Irish houses where things are so-so,
One gammon of bacon hangs up for a show;
But, for eating a rasher, of what they take pride in,
They 'd as soon think of eating the pan it was fry'd in.
. . . . . .
But hang it — to poets, who seldom can eat,
Your very good mutton 's a very good treat;
Such dainties to them, their health it might hurt;
It 's like sending them ruffles, when wanting a shirt."

We have an amusing anecdote of one of Goldsmith's blunders which took place on a subsequent visit to Lord Clare's, when that nobleman was residing in Bath.

Lord Clare and the Duke of Northumberland had houses next to each other of similar architecture. Returning home one morning from an early walk, Goldsmith, in one of his frequent fits of absence, mistook the house, and walked up into the Duke's dining-room, where he and the Duchess were about to sit down to breakfast. Goldsmith, still supposing himself in the house of Lord Clare, and that they were visitors, made them an easy salutation, being acquainted with them, and threw himself on a sofa in the lounging manner of a man perfectly at home. The Duke and Duchess soon perceived his mistake, and, while they smiled internally, endeavored, with the considerateness of well-bred people, to prevent any awkward embarrassment. They accordingly chatted sociably with him about matters in Bath, until, breakfast being served, they invited him to partake. The truth at once flashed upon poor heedless

Goldsmith; he started up from his free-and-easy position, made a confused apology for his blunder, and would have retired perfectly disconcerted, had not the Duke and Duchess treated the whole as a lucky occurrence to throw him in their way, and exacted a promise from him to dine with them.

This may be hung up as a companion-piece to his blunder on his first visit to Northumberland House.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. The death of Goldsmith's mother. What appears to have been her influence over Oliver?

2. Read a few pages (as many as you can) of Boswell's "Life of Johnson," and decide whether Irving's attitude to Boswell is a fair one. [A cheap edition of Boswell's book is published by T. Y. Crowell & Company, New York.]

3. Give an account of Goldsmith's appearance in the Duke of Northumberland's dining-room.

4. How could Gosfield Park prove a *Capua* to Goldsmith?

CHAPTER XXXI

Dinner at the Royal Academy — The Rowley Controversy — Horace Walpole's Conduct to Chatterton — Johnson at Redcliffe Church — Goldsmith's History of England — Davies's Criticism — Letter to Bennet Langton.

On St. George's day of this year (1771), the first annual banquet of the Royal Academy was held in the exhibition room; the walls of which were covered with works of art, about to be submitted to public inspection. Sir Joshua Reynolds, who first suggested this elegant festival, presided in his official character; Drs. Johnson and Goldsmith, of course, were present, as Professors of the academy; and, besides the academicians, there was a large number of the most distinguished men of the day as guests. Goldsmith on this occasion drew on himself the attention of the company by launching out with enthusiasm on the poems recently given to the world by Chatterton, as the works of an ancient author by the name of Rowley, discovered in the tower of Redcliffe Church, at Bristol. Goldsmith spoke of them with rapture, as a treasure of old English poetry. This immediately raised the question of their authenticity; they having been pronounced a forgery of Chatterton's. Goldsmith was warm for their being genuine. When he considered, he said, the merit of the poetry, the acquaintance with life and the human heart displayed in them, the antique quaintness of the language and the familiar knowledge of historical events of their supposed day, he could not believe it possible they could be the work of a boy of sixteen, of narrow education, and confined to the duties of an attorney's office. They must be the productions of Rowley.

Johnson, who was a stout unbeliever in Rowley, as he had been in Ossian, rolled in his chair and laughed at the enthusiasm of Goldsmith. Horace Walpole, who sat near by, joined in the laugh and jeer as soon as he found that the "*trouvaille*," as he called it, "of *his friend* Chatterton" was in question. This matter, which had excited the simple admiration of Goldsmith, was no novelty to him, he said. "He might, had he pleased, have had the honor of ushering the great discovery to the learned world." And so he might, had he followed his first impulse in the matter, for he himself had been an original believer; had pronounced some specimen verses sent to him by Chatterton wonderful for their harmony and spirit; and had been ready to print them and publish them to the world with his sanction. When he found, however, that his unknown correspondent was a mere boy, humble in sphere and indigent in circumstances, and when Gray and Mason pronounced the poems forgeries, he had changed his whole conduct towards the unfortunate author, and by his neglect and coldness had dashed all his sanguine hopes to the ground.

Exulting in his superior discernment, this cold-hearted man of society now went on to divert himself, as he says, with the credulity of Goldsmith, whom he was accustomed to pronounce "an inspired idiot"; but his mirth was soon dashed, for on asking the poet what had become of this Chatterton, he was answered, doubtless in the feeling tone of one who had experienced the pangs of despondent genius, that "he had been to London, and had destroyed himself."

The reply struck a pang of self-reproach even to the cold heart of Walpole; a faint blush may have visited his cheek at his recent levity. "The persons of honor and veracity who were present," said he in after-years, when he found it necessary to exculpate himself from the charge of heartless neglect of genius, "will attest with what surprise and

concern I thus first heard of his death." Well might he feel concern. His cold neglect had doubtless contributed to madden the spirit of that youthful genius, and hurry him towards his untimely end; nor have all the excuses and palliations of Walpole's friends and admirers been ever able entirely to clear this stigma from his fame.

But what was there in the enthusiasm and credulity of honest Goldsmith in this matter, to subject him to the laugh of Johnson or the raillery of Walpole? Granting the poems were not ancient, were they not good? Granting they were not the productions of Rowley, were they the less admirable for being the productions of Chatterton? Johnson himself testified to their merits and the genius of their composer, when, some years afterwards, he visited the tower of Redcliffe Church, and was shown the coffer in which poor Chatterton had pretended to find them. "This," said he, "is the most extraordinary young man that has encountered my knowledge. *It is wonderful how the whelp has written such things.*"

As to Goldsmith, he persisted in his credulity, and had subsequently a dispute with Dr. Percy on the subject, which interrupted and almost destroyed their friendship. After all, his enthusiasm was of a generous, poetic kind; the poems remain beautiful monuments of genius, and it is even now difficult to persuade one's self that they could be entirely the productions of a youth of sixteen.

In the month of August was published anonymously the "History of England," on which Goldsmith had been for some time employed. It was in four volumes, compiled chiefly, as he acknowledged in the preface, from Rapin, Carte, Smollett, and Hume, "each of whom," says he, "have their admirers, in proportion as the reader is studious of political antiquities, fond of minute anecdote, a warm partisan, or a deliberate reasoner." It possessed the same kind of merit as his other historical compilations; a clear, succinct

narrative, a simple, easy, and graceful style, and an agreeable arrangement of facts; but was not remarkable for either depth of observation or minute accuracy of research. Many passages were transferred, with little if any alteration, from his "Letters from a Nobleman to his Son" on the same subject. The work, though written without party feeling, met with sharp animadversions from political scribblers. The writer was charged with being unfriendly to liberty, disposed to elevate monarchy above its proper sphere; a tool of ministers; one who would betray his country for a pension. Tom Davies, the publisher, the pompous little bibliopole of Russell Street, alarmed lest the book should prove unsalable, undertook to protect it by his pen, and wrote a long article in its defence in *The Public Advertiser*. He was vain of his critical effusion, and sought by nods and winks and innuendoes to intimate his authorship. "Have you seen," said he, in a letter to a friend, "'An Impartial Account of Goldsmith's History of England'? If you want to know who was the writer of it, you will find him in Russell Street; — *but mum!*"

The History, on the whole, however, was well received; some of the critics declared that English history had never before been so usefully, so elegantly, and agreeably epitomized, "and, like his other historical writings, it has kept its ground" in English literature.

Goldsmith had intended this summer, in company with Sir Joshua Reynolds, to pay a visit to Bennet Langton, at his seat in Lincolnshire, where he was settled in domestic life, having the year previously married the Countess Dowager of Rothes. The following letter, however, dated from his chambers in the Temple, on the 7th of September, apologizes for putting off the visit, while it gives an amusing account of his summer occupations and of the attacks of the critics on his "History of England": —

"My dear Sir, —

"Since I had the pleasure of seeing you last, I have been almost wholly in the country, at a farmer's house, quite alone, trying to write a comedy. It is now finished; but when or how it will be acted, or whether it will be acted at all, are questions I cannot resolve. I am therefore so much employed upon that, that I am under the necessity of putting off my intended visit to Lincolnshire for this season. Reynolds is just returned from Paris, and finds himself now in the case of a truant that must make up for his idle time by diligence. We have therefore agreed to postpone our journey till next summer, when we hope to have the honor of waiting upon Lady Rothes and you, and staying double the time of our late intended visit. We often meet, and never without remembering you. I see Mr. Beauclerc very often both in town and country. He is now going directly forward to become a second Boyle: deep in chemistry and physics. Johnson has been down on a visit to a country parson, Doctor Taylor, and is returned to his old haunts at Mrs. Thrale's. Burke is a farmer, *en attendant* a better place; but visiting about too. Every soul is visiting about and merry but myself. And that is hard too, as I have been trying these three months to do something to make people laugh. There have I been strolling about the hedges, studying jests with a most tragical countenance. The "Natural History" is about half finished, and I will shortly finish the rest. God knows I am tired of this kind of finishing, which is but bungling work; and that not so much my fault as the fault of my scurvy circumstances. They begin to talk in town of the Opposition's gaining ground; the cry of liberty is still as loud as ever. I have published, or Davies has published for me, an "Abridgment of the History of England," for which I have been a good deal abused in the newspapers, for betraying the liberties of the people. God

knows I had no thought for or against liberty in my head; my whole aim being to make up a book of a decent size, that, as 'Squire Richard says, *would do no harm to nobody*. However, they set me down as an arrant Tory, and consequently an honest man. When you come to look at any part of it, you 'll say that I am a sore Whig. God bless you, and with my most respectful compliments to her Ladyship, I remain, dear Sir, your most affectionate humble servant,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Does Goldsmith state fairly what must have been his real aim in the "History of England"? Irving says that this abridgment has kept its ground in English literature. What qualities must a history possess in order to be considered literature? Is all written history literature?

2. When were the two projected works that are mentioned in Goldsmith's letter to Bennet Langton finally published?

CHAPTER XXXII

Marriage of Little Comedy — Goldsmith at Barton — Practical Jokes at the Expense of his Toilet — Amusements at Barton — Aquatic Misadventure.

Though Goldsmith found it impossible to break from his literary occupations to visit Bennet Langton, in Lincolnshire, he soon yielded to attractions from another quarter, in which somewhat of sentiment may have mingled. Miss Catherine Horneck, one of his beautiful fellow-travellers, otherwise called *Little Comedy*, had been married in August to Henry William Bunbury, Esq., a gentleman of fortune, who has become celebrated for the humorous productions of his pencil. Goldsmith was shortly afterwards invited to pay the newly married couple a visit at their seat, at Barton, in Suffolk. How could he resist such an invitation — especially as the Jessamy Bride would, of course, be among the guests? It is true, he was hampered with work; he was still more hampered with debt; his accounts with Newbery were perplexed; but all must give way. New advances are procured from Newbery, on the promise of a new tale in the style of the "Vicar of Wakefield," of which he showed him a few roughly-sketched chapters; so, his purse replenished in the old way, "by hook or by crook," he posted off to visit the bride at Barton. He found there a joyous household, and one where he was welcomed with affection. Garrick was there, and played the part of master of the revels, for he was an intimate friend of the master of the house. Notwithstanding early misunderstandings, a social intercourse between the actor and the poet had grown up of late, from meeting together continually in the same circle. A

few particulars have reached us concerning Goldsmith while on this happy visit. We believe the legend has come down from Miss Mary Horneck herself. "While at Barton," she says, "his manners were always playful and amusing, taking the lead in promoting any scheme of innocent mirth, and usually prefacing the invitation with 'Come, now, let us play the fool a little.' At cards, which was commonly a round game, and the stake small, he was always the most noisy, affected great eagerness to win, and teased his opponents of the gentler sex with continual jest and banter on their want of spirit in not risking the hazards of the game. But one of his most favorite enjoyments was to romp with the children, when he threw off all reserve, and seemed one of the most joyous of the group.

"One of the means by which he amused us was his songs, chiefly of the comic kind, which were sung with some taste and humor; several, I believe, were of his own composition, and I regret that I neither have copies, which might have been readily procured from him at the time, nor do I remember their names."

His perfect good-humor made him the object of tricks of all kinds; often in retaliation of some prank which he himself had played off. Unluckily, these tricks were sometimes made at the expense of his toilet, which, with a view peradventure to please the eye of a certain fair lady, he had again enriched to the impoverishment of his purse. "Being at all times gay in his dress," says this ladylike legend, "he made his appearance at the breakfast-table in a smart black silk coat with an expensive pair of ruffles; the coat some one contrived to soil, and it was sent to be cleansed; but, either by accident, or probably by design, the day after it came home, the sleeves became daubed with paint, which was not discovered until the ruffles also, to his great mortification, were irretrievably disfigured.

"He always wore a wig, a peculiarity which those who judge of his appearance only from the fine poetical head of Reynolds would not suspect; and on one occasion some person contrived seriously to injure this important adjunct to dress. It was the only one he had in the country, and the misfortune seemed irreparable until the services of Mr. Bunbury's valet were called in, who, however, performed his functions so indifferently, that poor Goldsmith's appearance became the signal for a general smile."

This was wicked waggery, especially when it was directed to mar all the attempts of the unfortunate poet to improve his personal appearance, about which he was at all times dubiously sensitive, and particularly when among the ladies.

We have in a former chapter recorded his unlucky tumble into a fountain at Versailles, when attempting a feat of agility in presence of the fair Hornecks. Water was destined to be equally baneful to him on the present occasion. "Some difference of opinion," says the fair narrator, "having arisen with Lord Harrington respecting the depth of a pond, the poet remarked that it was not so deep but that, if anything valuable was to be found at the bottom, he would not hesitate to pick it up. His lordship, after some banter, threw in a guinea; Goldsmith, not to be outdone in this kind of bravado, in attempting to fulfil his promise without getting wet, accidentally fell in, to the amusement of all present, but persevered, brought out the money, and kept it, remarking that he had abundant objects on whom to bestow any farther proofs of his lordship's whim or bounty."

All this is recorded by the beautiful Mary Horneck, the Jessamy Bride herself; but while she gives these amusing pictures of poor Goldsmith's eccentricities, and of the mischievous pranks played off upon him, she bears unqualified testimony, which we have quoted elsewhere, to the qualities

of his head and heart, which shone forth in his countenance, and gained him the love of all who knew him.

Among the circumstances of this visit vaguely called to mind by this fair lady in after years, was that Goldsmith read to her and her sister the first part of a novel which he had in hand. It was doubtless the manuscript mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, on which he had obtained an advance of money from Newbery to stave off some pressing debts, and to provide funds for this very visit. It never was finished. The bookseller, when he came afterwards to examine the manuscript, objected to it as a mere narrative version of the "Good-Natured Man." Goldsmith, too easily put out of conceit of his writings, threw it aside, forgetting that this was the very Newbery who kept his "Vicar of Wakefield" by him nearly two years, through doubts of its success. The loss of the manuscript is deeply to be regretted; it doubtless would have been properly wrought up before given to the press, and might have given us new scenes of life and traits of character, while it could not fail to bear traces of his delightful style. What a pity he had not been guided by the opinions of his fair listeners at Barton, instead of that of the astute Mr. Newbery!

QUESTION

1. Why did all who knew Goldsmith love him?

CHAPTER XXXIII

Dinner at General Oglethorpe's — Anecdotes of the General — Dispute about Duelling — Ghost Stories.

We have mentioned old General Oglethorpe as one of Goldsmith's aristocratical acquaintances. The veteran, born in 1698, had commenced life early, by serving, when a mere stripling, under Prince Eugene, against the Turks. He had continued in military life, and been promoted to the rank of major-general in 1745, and received a command during the Scottish rebellion. Being of strong Jacobite tendencies, he was suspected and accused of favoring the rebels; and though acquitted by a court of inquiry, was never afterwards employed; or, in technical language, was shelved. He had since been repeatedly a member of Parliament, and had always distinguished himself by learning, taste, active benevolence, and high Tory principles. His name, however, has become historical, chiefly from his transactions in America, and the share he took in the settlement of the colony of Georgia. It lies embalmed in honorable immortality in a single line of Pope's: —

> "One, driven *by strong benevolence of soul,*
> Shall fly, like Oglethorpe, from pole to pole."

The veteran was now seventy-four years of age, but healthy and vigorous, and as much the preux chevalier as in his younger days, when he served with Prince Eugene. His table was often the gathering-place of men of talent. Johnson was frequently there, and delighted in drawing from the General details of his various "experiences." He was anxious that he should give the world his life. "I know no

man," said he, "whose life would be more interesting." Still the vivacity of the General's mind and the variety of his knowledge made him skip from subject to subject too fast for the Lexicographer. "Oglethorpe," growled he, "never completes what he has to say."

Boswell gives us an interesting and characteristic account of a dinner-party at the General's, (April 10th, 1772,) at which Goldsmith and Johnson were present. After dinner, when the cloth was removed, Oglethorpe, at Johnson's request, gave an account of the siege of Belgrade, in the true veteran style. Pouring a little wine upon the table, he drew his lines and parallels with a wet finger, describing the positions of the opposing forces. "Here were we — here were the Turks," to all which Johnson listened with the most earnest attention, poring over the plans and diagrams with his usual purblind closeness.

In the course of conversation the General gave an anecdote of himself in early life, when serving under Prince Eugene. Sitting at table once in company with a prince of Wurtemberg, the latter gave a fillip to a glass of wine, so as to make some of it fly in Oglethorpe's face. The manner in which it was done was somewhat equivocal. How was it to be taken by the stripling officer? If seriously, he must challenge the Prince; but in so doing he might fix on himself the character of a drawcansir. If passed over without notice, he might be charged with cowardice. His mind was made up in an instant. "Prince," said he, smiling, "that is an excellent joke; but we do it much better in England." So saying he threw a whole glass of wine in the Prince's face. "Il a bien fait, mon Prince," cried an old General present, "vous l'avez commencé." (He has done right, my Prince; you commenced it.) The Prince had the good sense to acquiesce in the decision of the veteran, and Oglethorpe's retort in kind was taken in good part.

It was probably at the close of this story that the officious Boswell, ever anxious to promote conversation for the benefit of his note-book, started the question whether duelling were consistent with moral duty. The old General fired up in an instant. "Undoubtedly," said he, with a lofty air; "undoubtedly a man has a right to defend his honor." Goldsmith immediately carried the war into Boswell's own quarters, and pinned him with the question, "what he would do if affronted?" The pliant Boswell, who for the moment had the fear of the General rather than of Johnson before his eyes, replied, "he should think it necessary to fight." "Why, then, that solves the question," replied Goldsmith. "No, sir!" thundered out Johnson; "it does not follow that what a man would do, is therefore right." He, however, subsequently went into a discussion to show that there were necessities in the case arising out of the artificial refinement of society, and its proscription of any one who should put up with an affront without fighting a duel. "He, then," concluded he, "who fights a duel does not fight from passion against his antagonist, but out of self-defence, to avert the stigma of the world, and to prevent himself from being driven out of society. I could wish there were not that superfluity of refinement; but while such notions prevail, no doubt a man may lawfully fight a duel."

Another question started was, whether people who disagreed on a capital point could live together in friendship. Johnson said they might. Goldsmith said they could not, as they had not the idem velle atque idem nolle — the same likings and aversions. Johnson rejoined, that they must shun the subject on which they disagreed. "But, sir," said Goldsmith, "when people live together who have something as to which they disagree, and which they want to shun, they will be in the situation mentioned in the story of Blue Beard: 'you may look into all the chambers but one';

but we should have the greatest inclination to look into that chamber, to talk of that subject." "Sir," thundered Johnson, in a loud voice, "I am not saying that *you* could live in friendship with a man from whom you differ as to some point; I am only saying that *I* could do it."

Who will not say that Goldsmith had the best of this petty contest? How just was his remark! how felicitous the illustration of the blue chamber! how rude and overbearing was the argumentum ad hominem of Johnson, when he felt that he had the worst of the argument!

The conversation turned upon ghosts. General Oglethorpe told the story of a Colonel Prendergast, an officer in the Duke of Marlborough's army, who predicted among his comrades that he should die on a certain day. The battle of Malplaquet took place on that day. The Colonel was in the midst of it, but came out unhurt. The firing had ceased, and his brother officers jested with him about the fallacy of his prediction. "The day is not over," replied he, gravely; "I shall die notwithstanding what you see." His words proved true. The order for a cessation of firing had not reached one of the French batteries, and a random shot from it killed the Colonel on the spot. Among his effects was found a pocket-book in which he had made a solemn entry, that Sir John Friend, who had been executed for high treason, had appeared to him, either in a dream or vision, and predicted that he would meet him on a certain day (the very day of the battle). Colonel Cecil, who took possession of the effects of Colonel Prendergast, and read the entry in the pocket-book, told this story to Pope, the poet, in the presence of General Oglethorpe.

This story, as related by the General, appears to have been well received, if not credited, by both Johnson and Goldsmith, each of whom had something to relate in kind. Goldsmith's brother, the clergyman in whom he had such

implicit confidence, had assured him of his having seen an apparition. Johnson also had a friend, old Mr. Cave, the printer, at St. John's Gate, "an honest man, and a sensible man," who told him he had seen a ghost; he did not, however, like to talk of it, and seemed to be in great horror whenever it was mentioned. "And pray, sir," asked Boswell, "what did he say was the appearance?" "Why, sir, something of a shadowy being."

The reader will not be surprised at this superstitious turn in the conversation of such intelligent men, when he recollects that, but a few years before this time, all London had been agitated by the absurd story of the Cock-lane ghost; a matter which Dr. Johnson had deemed worthy of his serious investigation, and about which Goldsmith had written a pamphlet.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Narrate what happened at General Oglethorpe's dinner party.

2. Are ghost stories current in the twentieth century? Have you ever heard of a ghost's troubling the community in which you live? Are there any haunted houses? [Recall the story of the Coverley ghost told about in the "Sir Roger de Coverley Papers."]

3. Discuss the superstitions that hold sway among people of your acquaintance. Why should superstitions be less common now than in the eighteenth century?

CHAPTER XXXIV

Mr. Joseph Cradock — An Author's Confidings — An Amanuensis — Life at Edgeware — Goldsmith Conjuring — George Colman — The Fantoccini.

Among the agreeable acquaintances made by Goldsmith about this time was a Mr. Joseph Cradock, a young gentleman of Leicestershire, living at his ease, but disposed to "make himself uneasy," by meddling with literature and the theatre; in fact, he had a passion for plays and players, and had come up to town with a modified translation of Voltaire's tragedy of "Zobeide," in a view to get it acted. There was no great difficulty in the case, as he was a man of fortune, had letters of introduction to persons of note, and was altogether in a different position from the indigent man of genius whom managers might harass with impunity. Goldsmith met him at the house of Yates, the actor, and finding that he was a friend of Lord Clare, soon became sociable with him. Mutual tastes quickened the intimacy, especially as they found means of serving each other. Goldsmith wrote an epilogue for the tragedy of "Zobeide"; and Cradock, who was an amateur musician, arranged the music for the "Threnodia Augustalis," a Lament on the death of the Princess Dowager of Wales, the political mistress and patron of Lord Clare, which Goldsmith had thrown off hastily to please that nobleman. The tragedy was played with some success at Covent Garden; the Lament was recited and sung at Mrs. Cornelys' rooms — a very fashionable resort in Soho Square, got up by a woman of enterprise of that name. It was in whimsical parody of those gay and somewhat promiscuous assemblages that Goldsmith used to call the motley evening parties at his lodgings "little Cornelys."

The "Threnodia Augustalis" was not publicly known to be by Goldsmith until several years after his death.

Cradock was one of the few polite intimates who felt more disposed to sympathize with the generous qualities of the poet than to sport with his eccentricities. He sought his society whenever he came to town, and occasionally had him to his seat in the country. Goldsmith appreciated his sympathy, and unburdened himself to him without reserve. Seeing the lettered ease in which this amateur author was enabled to live, and the time he could bestow on the elaboration of a manuscript, "Ah! Mr. Cradock," cried he, "think of me, that must write a volume every month!" He complained to him of the attempts made by inferior writers, and by others who could scarcely come under that denomination, not only to abuse and depreciate his writings, but to render him ridiculous as a man; perverting every harmless sentiment and action into charges of absurdity, malice, or folly. "Sir," said he, in the fulness of his heart, "I am as a lion baited by curs!"

Another acquaintance, which he made about this time, was a young countryman of the name of M'Donnell, whom he met in a state of destitution, and, of course, befriended. The following grateful recollections of his kindness and his merits were furnished by that person in after-years: —

"It was in the year 1772," writes he, "that the death of my elder brother — when in London, on my way to Ireland — left me in a most forlorn situation; I was then about eighteen; I possessed neither friends nor money, nor the means of getting to Ireland, of which or of England I knew scarcely anything, from having so long resided in France. In this situation I had strolled about for two or three days, considering what to do, but unable to come to any determination, when Providence directed me to the Temple Gardens. I threw myself on a seat, and, willing to forget my miseries

for a moment, drew out a book; that book was a volume of Boileau. I had not been there long when a gentleman, strolling about, passed near me, and observing, perhaps, something Irish or foreign in my garb or countenance, addressed me: 'Sir, you seem studious; I hope you find this a favorable place to pursue it.' 'Not very studious, sir; I fear it is the want of society that brings me hither; I am solitary and unknown in this metropolis'; and a passage from Cicero — Oratio pro Archia — occurring to me, I quoted it: 'Hæc studia pernoctant nobiscum, peregrinantur, rusticantur.' 'You are a scholar, too, sir, I perceive.' 'A piece of one, sir; but I ought still to have been in the college where I had the good fortune to pick up the little I know.' A good deal of conversation ensued; I told him part of my history, and he, in return, gave his address in the Temple, desiring me to call soon, from which, to my infinite surprise and gratification, I found that the person who thus seemed to take an interest in my fate was my countryman, and a distinguished ornament of letters.

"I did not fail to keep the appointment, and was received in the kindest manner. He told me, smilingly, that he was not rich; that he could do little for me in direct pecuniary aid, but would endeavor to put me in the way of doing something for myself; observing, that he could at least furnish me with advice not wholly useless to a young man placed in the heart of a great metropolis. 'In London,' he continued, 'nothing is to be got for nothing; you must work; and no man who chooses to be industrious need be under obligations to another, for here labor of every kind commands its reward. If you think proper to assist me occasionally as amanuensis, I shall be obliged, and you will be placed under no obligation, until something more permanent can be secured for you.' This employment, which I pursued for some time, was to translate passages from Buffon, which were abridged

or altered, according to circumstances, for his 'Natural History.'"

Goldsmith's literary tasks were fast getting ahead of him, and he began now to "toil after them in vain."

Five volumes of the "Natural History" here spoken of had long since been paid for by Mr. Griffin, yet most of them were still to be written. His young amanuensis bears testimony to his embarrassments and perplexities, but to the degree of equanimity with which he bore them:—

"It has been said," observes he, "that he was irritable. Such may have been the case at times; nay, I believe it was so; for what with the continual pursuit of authors, printers, and booksellers, and occasional pecuniary embarrassments, few could have avoided exhibiting similar marks of impatience. But it was never so towards me. I saw him only in his bland and kind moods, with a flow, perhaps an overflow, of the milk of human kindness for all who were in any manner dependent upon him. I looked upon him with awe and veneration, and he upon me as a kind parent upon a child.

"His manner and address exhibited much frankness and cordiality, particularly to those with whom he possessed any degree of intimacy. His good-nature was equally apparent. You could not dislike the man, although several of his follies and foibles you might be tempted to condemn. He was generous and inconsiderate; money with him had little value."

To escape from many of the tormentors just alluded to, and to devote himself without interruption to his task, Goldsmith took lodgings for the summer at a farm-house near the six-mile stone on the Edgeware road, and carried down his books in two return post-chaises. He used to say he believed the farmer's family thought him an odd character, similar to that in which the *Spectator* appeared to his landlady and her children; he was *The Gentleman*. Boswell tells us that he went to visit him at the place in company with

Mickle, translator of the "Lusiad." Goldsmith was not at home. Having a curiosity to see his apartment, however, they went in, and found curious scraps of descriptions of animals scrawled upon the wall with a black lead pencil.

The farm-house in question is still in existence, though much altered. It stands upon a gentle eminence in Hyde Lane, commanding a pleasant prospect towards Hendon. The room is still pointed out in which "She Stoops to Conquer" was written; a convenient and airy apartment, up one flight of stairs.

Some matter-of-fact traditions concerning the author were furnished, a few years since, by a son of the farmer, who was sixteen years of age at the time Goldsmith resided with his father. Though he had engaged to board with the family, his meals were generally sent to him in his room, in which he passed the most of his time, negligently dressed, with his shirt-collar open, busily engaged in writing. Sometimes, probably when in moods of composition, he would wander into the kitchen, without noticing any one, stand musing with his back to the fire, and then hurry off again to his room, no doubt to commit to paper some thought which had struck him.

Sometimes he strolled about the fields, or was to be seen loitering and reading and musing under the hedges. He was subject to fits of wakefulness, and read much in bed; if not disposed to read, he still kept the candle burning; if he wished to extinguish it, and it was out of his reach, he flung his slipper at it, which would be found in the morning near the overturned candlestick and daubed with grease. He was noted here, as everywhere else, for his charitable feelings. No beggar applied to him in vain, and he evinced on all occasions great commiseration for the poor.

He had the use of the parlor to receive and entertain company, and was visited by Sir Joshua Reynolds, Hugh

Boyd, the reputed author of "Junius," Sir William Chambers, and other distinguished characters. He gave occasionally, though rarely, a dinner-party; and on one occasion, when his guests were detained by a thunder-shower, he got up a dance, and carried the merriment late into the night.

As usual, he was the promoter of hilarity among the young, and at one time took the children of the house to see a company of strolling players at Hendon. The greatest amusement to the party, however, was derived from his own jokes on the road and his comments on the performance, which produced infinite laughter among his youthful companions.

Near to his rural retreat at Edgeware, a Mr. Seguin, an Irish merchant, of literary tastes, had country quarters for his family, where Goldsmith was always welcome.

In this family he would indulge in playful and even grotesque humor, and was ready for anything — conversation, music, or a game of romps. He prided himself upon his dancing, and would walk a minuet with Mrs. Seguin, to the infinite amusement of herself and the children, whose shouts of laughter he bore with perfect good-humor. He would sing Irish songs, and the Scotch ballad of "Johnny Armstrong." He took the lead in the children's sports of blind-man's-buff, hunt the slipper, &c., or in their games at cards, and was the most noisy of the party, affecting to cheat and to be excessively eager to win; while with children of smaller size he would turn the hind part of his wig before, and play all kinds of tricks to amuse them.

One word as to his musical skill and his performance on the flute, which comes up so invariably in all his fireside revels. He really knew nothing of music scientifically; he had a good ear, and may have played sweetly; but we are told he could not read a note of music. Roubillac, the statuary, once played a trick upon him in this respect.

He pretended to score down an air as the poet played it, but put down crotchets and semibreves at random. When he had finished, Goldsmith cast his eyes over it and pronounced it correct! It is possible that his execution in music was like his style in writing; in sweetness and melody he may have snatched a grace beyond the reach of art!

He was at all times a capital companion for children, and knew how to fall in with their humors. "I little thought," said Miss Hawkins, the woman grown, "what I should have to boast when Goldsmith taught me to play Jack and Jill by two bits of paper on his fingers." He entertained Mrs. Garrick, we are told, with a whole budget of stories and songs; delivered the "Chimney Sweep" with exquisite taste as a solo; and performed a duet with Garrick of "Old Rose and Burn the Bellows."

"I was only five years old," says the late George Colman, "when Goldsmith one evening, when drinking coffee with my father, took me on his knee and began to play with me, which amiable act I returned with a very smart slap in the face; it must have been a tingler, for I left the marks of my little spiteful paw upon his cheek. This infantile outrage was followed by summary justice, and I was locked up by my father in an adjoining room, to undergo solitary imprisonment in the dark. Here I began to howl and scream most abominably. At length a friend appeared to extricate me from jeopardy; it was the good-natured Doctor himself, with a lighted candle in his hand, and a smile upon his countenance, which was still partially red from the effects of my petulance. I sulked and sobbed, and he fondled and soothed until I began to brighten. He seized the propitious moment, placed three hats upon the carpet, and a shilling under each; the shillings, he told me, were England, France, and Spain. 'Hey, presto, cockolorum!' cried the Doctor, and, lo! on uncovering the shillings, they were all found

congregated under one. I was no politician at the time, and therefore might not have wondered at the sudden revolution which brought England, France, and Spain all under one crown; but, as I was also no conjurer, it amazed me beyond measure. From that time, whenever the Doctor came to visit my father,

> "'I pluck'd his gown to share the good man's smile';

a game of romps constantly ensued, and we were always cordial friends and merry playfellows."

Although Goldsmith made the Edgeware farm-house his headquarters for the summer, he would absent himself for weeks at a time on visits to Mr. Cradock, Lord Clare, and Mr. Langton, at their country-seats. He would often visit town, also, to dine and partake of the public amusements. On one occasion he accompanied Edmund Burke to witness a performance of the Italian Fantoccini or Puppets, in Panton Street; an exhibition which had hit the caprice of the town, and was in a great vogue. The puppets were set in motion by wires, so well concealed as to be with difficulty detected. Boswell, with his usual obtuseness with respect to Goldsmith, accuses him of being jealous of the puppets! "When Burke," said he, "praised the dexterity with which one of them tossed a pike, 'Pshaw,' said Goldsmith *with some warmth*, 'I can do it better myself.'" "The same evening," adds Boswell, "when supping at Burke's lodgings, he broke his shin by attempting to exhibit to the company how much better he could jump over a stick than the puppets."

Goldsmith jealous of puppets! This even passes in absurdity Boswell's charge upon him of being jealous of the beauty of the two Miss Hornecks.

The Panton-Street puppets were destined to be a source of further amusement to the town, and of annoyance to the

little autocrat of the stage. Foote, the Aristophanes of the English drama, who was always on the alert to turn every subject of popular excitement to account, seeing the success of the Fantoccini, gave out that he should produce a Primitive Puppet-Show at the Haymarket, to be entitled "The Handsome Chambermaid, or Piety in Pattens"; intended to burlesque the *sentimental comedy* which Garrick still maintained at Drury Lane. The idea of a play to be performed in a regular theatre by puppets excited the curiosity and talk of the town. "Will your puppets be as large as life, Mr. Foote?" demanded a lady of rank. "Oh, no, my lady," replied Foote, "*not much larger than Garrick.*"

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Do you blame Goldsmith at this period (about 1772) for being occasionally irritable?

2. Gather together all the bad qualities of Goldsmith thus far chronicled by Irving, and all the good qualities.

3. Goldsmith's fondness for children.

4. Write a composition on how Goldsmith spent his summers for a number of years before his death.

5. New acquaintances of Goldsmith at this period.

CHAPTER XXXV

Broken Health — Dissipation and Debts — The Irish Widow — Practical Jokes — Scrub — A misquoted Pun — Malagrida — Goldsmith proved to be a Fool — Distressed Ballad-Singers — The Poet at Ranelagh.

Goldsmith returned to town in the autumn (1772), with his health much disordered. His close fits of sedentary application, during which he in a manner tied himself to the mast, had laid the seeds of a lurking malady in his system, and produced a severe illness in the course of the summer. Town-life was not favorable to the health either of body or mind. He could not resist the siren voice of temptation, which, now that he had become a notoriety, assailed him on every side. Accordingly we find him launching away in a career of social dissipation; dining and supping out; at clubs, at routs, at theatres; he is a guest with Johnson at the Thrales, and an object of Mrs. Thrale's lively sallies; he is a lion at Mrs. Vesey's and Mrs. Montagu's, where some of the high-bred blue-stockings pronounce him a "wild genius," and others, peradventure, a "wild Irishman." In the mean time his pecuniary difficulties are increasing upon him, conflicting with his proneness to pleasure and expense, and contributing by the harassment of his mind to the wear and tear of his constitution. His "Animated Nature," though not finished, has been entirely paid for, and the money spent. The money advanced by Garrick on Newbery's note, still hangs over him as a debt. The tale on which Newbery had loaned from two to three hundred pounds previous to the excursion to Barton, has proved a failure. The bookseller is urgent for the settlement of his complicated account; the perplexed

author has nothing to offer him in liquidation but the copyright of the comedy which he has in his portfolio; "Though, to tell you the truth, Frank," said he, "there are great doubts of its success." The offer was accepted, and, like bargains wrung from Goldsmith in times of emergency, turned out a golden speculation to the bookseller.

In this way Goldsmith went on "overrunning the constable," as he termed it; spending everything in advance; working with an overtasked head and weary heart to pay for past pleasures and past extravagance, and at the same time incurring new debts, to perpetuate his struggles and darken his future prospects. While the excitement of society and the excitement of composition conspire to keep up a feverishness of the system, he has incurred an unfortunate habit of quacking himself with James's powders, a fashionable panacea of the day.

A farce, produced this year by Garrick, and entitled "The Irish Widow," perpetuates the memory of practical jokes played off a year or two previously upon the alleged vanity of poor, simple-hearted Goldsmith. He was one evening at the house of his friend Burke, when he was beset by a tenth muse, an Irish widow and authoress, just arrived from Ireland, full of brogue and blunders, and poetic fire and rantipole gentility. She was soliciting subscriptions for her poems, and assailed Goldsmith for his patronage; the great Goldsmith — her countryman, and of course her friend. She overpowered him with eulogiums on his own poems, and then read some of her own, with vehemence of tone and gesture, appealing continually to the great Goldsmith to know how he relished them.

Poor Goldsmith did all that a kind-hearted and gallant gentleman could do in such a case; he praised her poems as far as the stomach of his sense would permit — perhaps a little further; he offered her his subscription; and it was

not until she had retired with many parting compliments to the great Goldsmith, that he pronounced the poetry which had been inflicted on him execrable. The whole scene had been a hoax got up by Burke for the amusement of his company; and the Irish widow, so admirably performed, had been personated by a Mrs. Balfour, a lady of his connection, of great sprightliness and talent.

We see nothing in the story to establish the alleged vanity of Goldsmith, but we think it tells rather to the disadvantage of Burke, — being unwarrantable under their relations of friendship, and a species of waggery quite beneath his genius.

Croker, in his notes to Boswell, gives another of these practical jokes perpetrated by Burke at the expense of Goldsmith's credulity. It was related to Croker by Colonel O'Moore, of Cloghan Castle, in Ireland, who was a party concerned. The Colonel and Burke, walking one day through Leicester Square on their way to Sir Joshua Reynolds's, with whom they were to dine, observed Goldsmith, who was likewise to be a guest, standing and regarding a crowd which was staring and shouting at some foreign ladies in the window of a hotel. "Observe Goldsmith," said Burke to O'Moore, "and mark what passes between us at Sir Joshua's." They passed on and reached there before him. Burke received Goldsmith with affected reserve and coldness; being pressed to explain the reason, "Really," said he, "I am ashamed to keep company with a person who could act as you have just done in the Square." Goldsmith protested he was ignorant of what was meant. "Why," said Burke, "did you not exclaim, as you were looking up at those women, what stupid beasts the crowd must be for staring with such admiration at those *painted Jezebels*, while a man of your talents passed by unnoticed?" "Surely, surely, my dear friend," cried Goldsmith, with

alarm, "surely I did not say so?" "Nay," replied Burke, "if you had not said so, how should I have known it?" "That's true," answered Goldsmith, "I am very sorry — it was very foolish: *I do recollect that something of the kind passed through my mind, but I did not think I had uttered it.*"

It is proper to observe that these jokes were played off by Burke before he had attained the full eminence of his social position, and that he may have felt privileged to take liberties with Goldsmith as his countryman and college associate. It is evident, however, that the peculiarities of the latter, and his guileless simplicity, made him a butt for the broad waggery of some of his associates; while others more polished, though equally perfidious, were on the watch to give currency to his bulls and blunders.

The Stratford jubilee, in honor of Shakspeare, where Boswell had made a fool of himself, was still in every one's mind. It was sportively suggested that a fête should be held at Litchfield in honor of Johnson and Garrick, and that the "Beaux Stratagem" should be played by the members of the Literary Club. "Then," exclaimed Goldsmith, "I shall certainly play Scrub. I should like of all things to try my hand at that character." The unwary speech, which any one else might have made without comment, has been thought worthy of record as whimsically characteristic. Beauclerc was extremely apt to circulate anecdotes at his expense, founded perhaps on some trivial incident, but dressed up with the embellishments of his sarcastic brain. One relates to a venerable dish of peas, served up at Sir Joshua's table, which should have been green, but were any other color. A wag suggested to Goldsmith, in a whisper, that they should be sent to Hammersmith, as that was the way to *turn-em-green* (Turnham Green). Goldsmith, delighted with the pun, endeavored to repeat it at Burke's table, but missed the point. "That is the way to *make* 'em green,"

said he. Nobody laughed. He perceived he was at fault. "I mean that is the *road* to turn 'em green." A dead pause and a stare; — "whereupon," adds Beauclerc, "he started up disconcerted and abruptly left the table." This is evidently one of Beauclerc's caricatures.

On another occasion the poet and Beauclerc were seated at the theatre next to Lord Shelburne, the minister, whom political writers thought proper to nickname Malagrida. "Do you know," said Goldsmith to his lordship, in the course of conversation, "that I never could conceive why they call you Malagrida, *for* Malagrida was a very good sort of man." This was too good a trip of the tongue for Beauclerc to let pass: he serves it up in his next letter to Lord Charlemont, as a specimen of a mode of turning a thought the wrong way, peculiar to the poet; he makes merry over it with his witty and sarcastic compeer, Horace Walpole, who pronounces it "a picture of Goldsmith's whole life." Dr. Johnson alone, when he hears it bandied about as Goldsmith's last blunder, growls forth a friendly defence: "Sir," said he, "it was a mere blunder in emphasis. He meant to say, I wonder they should use Malagrida as a term of reproach." Poor Goldsmith! On such points he was ever doomed to be misinterpreted. Rogers, the poet, meeting in times long subsequent with a survivor from those days, asked him what Goldsmith really was in conversation. The old conventional character was too deeply stamped in the memory of the veteran to be effaced. "Sir," replied the old wiseacre, "*he was a fool.* The right word never came to him. If you gave him back a bad shilling, he 'd say, Why, it 's as good a shilling as ever was *born.* You know he ought to have said *coined.* *Coined*, sir, never entered his head. *He was a fool, sir.*"

We have so many anecdotes in which Goldsmith's simplicity is played upon, that it is quite a treat to meet with

one in which he is represented playing upon the simplicity of others, especially when the victim of his joke is the "Great Cham" himself, whom all others are disposed to hold so much in awe. Goldsmith and Johnson were supping cosily together at a tavern in Dean Street, Soho, kept by Jack Roberts, a singer at Drury Lane, and a protégé of Garrick's. Johnson delighted in these gastronomical *tête-a-têtes*, and was expatiating in high good-humor on a dish of rumps and kidneys, the veins of his forehead swelling with the ardor of mastication. "These," said he, "are pretty little things; but a man must eat a great many of them before he is filled." "Aye; but how many of them," asked Goldsmith, with affected simplicity, "would reach to the moon?" "To the moon! Ah, sir, that, I fear, exceeds your calculation." "Not at all, sir; I think I could tell." "Pray, then, sir, let us hear." "Why, sir, one, *if it were long enough!*" Johnson growled for a time at finding himself caught in such a trite schoolboy trap. "Well, sir," cried he at length, "I have deserved it. I should not have provoked so foolish an answer by so foolish a question."

Among the many incidents related as illustrative of Goldsmith's vanity and envy is one which occurred one evening when he was in a drawing-room with a party of ladies, and a ballad-singer under the window struck up his favorite song of "Sally Salisbury." "How miserably this woman sings!" exclaimed he. "Pray, Doctor," said the lady of the house, "could you do it better?" "Yes, madam, and the company shall be judges." The company, of course, prepared to be entertained by an absurdity; but their smiles were wellnigh turned to tears, for he acquitted himself with a skill and pathos that drew universal applause. He had, in fact, a delicate ear for music, which had been jarred by the false notes of the ballad-singer; and there were certain

pathetic ballads, associated with recollections of his childhood, which were sure to touch the springs of his heart. We have another story of him, connected with ballad-singing, which is still more characteristic. He was one evening at the house of Sir William Chambers, in Berners Street, seated at a whist-table with Sir William, Lady Chambers, and Baretti, when all at once he threw down his cards, hurried out of the room and into the street. He returned in an instant, resumed his seat, and the game went on. Sir William, after a little hesitation, ventured to ask the cause of his retreat, fearing he had been overcome by the heat of the room. "Not at all," replied Goldsmith; "but in truth I could not bear to hear that unfortunate woman in the street, half singing, half sobbing, for such tones could only arise from the extremity of distress; her voice grated painfully on my ear and jarred my frame, so that I could not rest until I had sent her away." It was in fact a poor ballad-singer whose cracked voice had been heard by others of the party, but without having the same effect on their sensibilities. It was the reality of his fictitious scene in the story of the "Man in Black"; wherein he describes a woman in rags, with one child in her arms and another on her back, attempting to sing ballads, but with such a mournful voice that it was difficult to determine whether she was singing or crying. "A wretch," he adds, "who, in the deepest distress, still aimed at good-humor, was an object my friend was by no means capable of withstanding." The "Man in Black" gave the poor woman all that he had — a bundle of matches. Goldsmith, it is probable, sent his ballad-singer away rejoicing, with all the money in his pocket.

Ranelagh was at that time greatly in vogue as a place of public entertainment. It was situated near Chelsea; the principal room was a Rotunda of great dimensions, with an

orchestra in the centre, and tiers of boxes all round. It was a place to which Johnson resorted occasionally. "I am a great friend to public amusements," said he, "for they keep people from vice."[1] Goldsmith was equally a friend to them, though perhaps not altogether on such moral grounds. He was particularly fond of masquerades, which were then exceedingly popular, and got up at Ranelagh with great expense and magnificence. Sir Joshua Reynolds, who had likewise a taste for such amusements, was sometimes his companion; at other times he went alone; his peculiarities of person and manner would soon betray him, whatever might be his disguise, and he would be singled out by wags, acquainted with his foibles, and more successful than himself in maintaining their incognito, as a capital subject to be played upon. Some, pretending not to know him, would decry his writings, and praise those of his contemporaries; others would laud his verses to the skies, but purposely misquote and burlesque them; others would annoy him with parodies; while one young lady, whom he was teasing, as he supposed, with great success and infinite humor, silenced his rather boisterous laughter by quoting his own line about "the loud laugh that speaks the vacant mind." On one occasion he was absolutely driven out of the house by the persevering jokes of a wag, whose complete disguise gave him no means of retaliation.

His name appearing in the newspapers among the distinguished persons present at one of these amusements, his old

[1] "Alas, sir!" said Johnson, speaking, when in another mood, of grand houses, fine gardens, and splendid places of public amusement; "alas, sir! these are only struggles for happiness. When I first entered Ranelagh it gave an expansion and gay sensation to my mind, such as I never experienced anywhere else. But, as Xerxes wept when he viewed his immense army, and considered that not one of that great multitude would be alive a hundred years afterwards, so it went to my heart to consider that there was not one in all that brilliant circle that was not afraid to go home and think."

enemy, Kenrick, immediately addressed to him a copy of anonymous verses, to the following purport.

TO DR. GOLDSMITH

ON SEEING HIS NAME IN THE LIST OF MUMMERS AT THE LATE MASQUERADE

"How widely different, Goldsmith, are the ways
Of Doctors now, and those of ancient days!
Theirs taught the truth in academic shades,
Ours in lewd hops and midnight masquerades.
So changed the times! say, philosophic sage,
Whose genius suits so well this tasteful age,
Is the Pantheon, late a sink obscene,
Become the fountain of chaste Hippocrene?
Or do thy moral numbers quaintly flow,
Inspired by th' *Aganippe* of Soho?
Do wisdom's sons gorge cates and vermicelli,
Like beastly Bickerstaffe or bothering Kelly?
Or art thou tired of th' undeserved applause,
Bestowed on bards affecting Virtue's cause?
Is this the good that makes the humble vain,
The good philosophy should not disdain?
If so, let pride dissemble all it can,
A modern sage is still much less than man."

Goldsmith was keenly sensitive to attacks of the kind, and meeting Kenrick at the Chapter Coffee-House, called him to sharp account for taking such liberty with his name, and calling his morals in question, merely on account of his being seen at a place of general resort and amusement. Kenrick shuffled and sneaked, protesting that he meant nothing derogatory to his private character. Goldsmith let him know, however, that he was aware of his having more than once indulged in attacks of this dastard kind, and intimated that another such outrage would be followed by personal chastisement.

Kenrick, having played the craven in his presence, avenged himself as soon as he was gone by complaining of his having

made a wanton attack upon him, and by making coarse comments upon his writings, conversation, and person.

The scurrilous satire of Kenrick, however unmerited, may have checked Goldsmith's taste for masquerades. Sir Joshua Reynolds, calling on the poet one morning, found him walking about his room in somewhat of a reverie, kicking a bundle of clothes before him like a football. It proved to be an expensive masquerade dress, which he said he had been fool enough to purchase, and as there was no other way of getting the worth of his money, he was trying to take it out in exercise.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Do you pity the Goldsmith of this chapter?

2. Was Goldsmith vain?

3. Does Irving's attitude to Boswell when he says that Boswell "made a fool of himself" appear biased?

4. Give illustrations from your own experience of failures to re-tell jokes so that the point would be plain.

5. Anecdotes dealing with Goldsmith's simplicity.

6. Goldsmith's gay life as depicted in Chapters XXXV and XXXVI.

CHAPTER XXXVI

Invitation to Christmas — The Spring-Velvet Coat — The Haymaking Wig — The Mischances of Loo — The Fair Culprit — A Dance with the Jessamy Bride.

From the feverish dissipations of town, Goldsmith is summoned away to partake of the genial dissipations of the country. In the month of December, a letter from Mrs. Bunbury invites him down to Barton, to pass the Christmas holidays. The letter is written in the usual playful vein which marks his intercourse with this charming family. He is to come in his "smart spring-velvet coat," to bring a new wig to dance with the haymakers in, and above all to follow the advice of herself and her sister, (the Jessamy Bride,) in playing loo. This letter, which plays so archly, yet kindly, with some of poor Goldsmith's peculiarities, and bespeaks such real lady-like regard for him, requires a word or two of annotation. The spring-velvet suit alluded to appears to have been a gallant adornment, (somewhat in the style of the famous bloom-colored coat,) in which Goldsmith had figured in the preceding month of May — the season of blossoms, for, on the 21st of that month, we find the following entry in the chronicle of Mr. William Filby, tailor: *To your blue velvet suit*, £21 10*s.* 9*d.* Also, about the same time, a suit of livery and a crimson collar for the serving-man. Again we hold the Jessamy Bride responsible for this gorgeous splendor of wardrobe.

The new wig no doubt is a bag-wig and solitaire, still highly the mode, and in which Goldsmith is represented as figuring when in full dress equipped with his sword.

As to the dancing with the haymakers, we presume it alludes to some gambol of the poet, in the course of his former visit to Barton; when he ranged the fields and lawns a chartered libertine, and tumbled into the fish-ponds.

As to the suggestions about loo, they are in sportive allusion to the Doctor's mode of playing that game in their merry evening parties; affecting the desperate gambler and easy dupe; running counter to all rule; making extravagant ventures; reproaching all others with cowardice; dashing at all hazards at the pool, and getting himself completely loo'd, to the great amusement of the company. The drift of the fair sisters' advice was most probably to tempt him on, and then leave him in the lurch.

With these comments we subjoin Goldsmith's reply to Mrs. Bunbury, a fine piece of off-hand, humorous writing, which has but in late years been given to the public, and which throws a familiar light on the social circle at Barton.

"MADAM, — I read your letter with all that allowance which critical candor could require, but after all find so much to object to, and so much to raise my indignation, that I cannot help giving it a serious answer. — I am not so ignorant, madam, as not to see there are many sarcasms contained in it, and solecisms also. (Solecism is a word that comes from the town of Soleis in Attica, among the Greeks, built by Solon, and applied as we use the word Kidderminster for curtains from a town also of that name; — but this is learning you have no taste for!) — I say, madam, that there are many sarcasms in it, and solecisms also. But not to seem an ill-natured critic, I 'll take leave to quote your own words, and give you my remarks upon them as they occur. You begin as follows: —

> "'I hope, my good Doctor, you soon will be here,
> And your spring-velvet coat very smart will appear,
> To open our ball the first day of the year.'

"Pray, madam, where did you ever find the epithet 'good,' applied to the title of doctor? Had you called me 'learned doctor,' or 'grave doctor,' or 'noble doctor,' it might be allowable, because they belong to the profession. But, not to cavil at trifles, you talk of my 'spring-velvet coat,' and advise me to wear it the first day in the year, that is, in the middle of winter! — a spring-velvet coat in the middle of winter!!! That would be a solecism indeed! and yet to increase the inconsistency, in another part of your letter you call me a beau. Now, on one side or other, you must be wrong. If I am a beau, I can never think of wearing a spring-velvet in winter; and if I am not a beau, why then, that explains itself. But let me go on to your two next strange lines: —

> "'And bring with you a wig, that is modish and gay,
> To dance with the girls that are makers of hay.'

"The absurdity of making hay at Christmas you yourself seem sensible of: you say your sister will laugh; and so indeed she well may! The Latins have an expression for a contemptuous kind of laughter, 'naso contemnere adunco'; that is, to laugh with a crooked nose. She may laugh at you in the manner of the ancients if she thinks fit. But now I come to the most extraordinary of all extraordinary propositions, — which is, to take your and your sister's advice in playing at loo. The presumption of the offer raises my indignation beyond the bounds of prose; it inspires me at once with verse and resentment. I take advice! and from whom? You shall hear.

> "First let me suppose, what may shortly be true,
> The company set, and the word to be Loo:
> All smirking, and pleasant, and big with adventure,
> And ogling the stake which is fix'd in the centre.
> Round and round go the cards, while I inwardly damn
> At never once finding a visit from Pam.

I lay down my stake, apparently cool,
While the harpies about me all pocket the pool.
I fret in my gizzard, yet, cautious and sly,
I wish all my friends may be bolder than I:
Yet still they sit snug, not a creature will aim
By losing their money to venture at fame.
'T is in vain that at niggardly caution I scold,
'T is in vain that I flatter the brave and the bold:
All play their own way, and they think me an ass,—
'What does Mrs. Bunbury?' . . 'I, Sir? I pass.'
'Pray what does Miss Horneck? take courage, come do,'—
'Who, I?—let me see, sir, why I must pass too.'
Mr. Bunbury frets, and I fret like the devil,
To see them so cowardly, lucky, and civil.
Yet still I sit snug, and continue to sigh on,
Till, made by my losses as bold as a lion,
I venture at all, while my avarice regards
The whole pool as my own. . . 'Come, give me five cards.'
'Well done!' cry the ladies; 'ah, Doctor, that 's good!
The pool 's very rich, . . ah! the Doctor is loo'd!'
Thus foil'd in my courage, on all sides perplext,
I ask for advice from the lady that 's next:
'Pray, ma'am, be so good as to give your advice;
Don't you think the best way is to venture for 't twice?'
'I advise,' cries the lady, 'to try it, I own. . .
Ah! the Doctor is loo'd! Come, Doctor, put down.'
Thus, playing, and playing, I still grow more eager,
And so bold, and so bold, I 'm at last a bold beggar.
Now, ladies, I ask, if law-matters you 're skill'd in,
Whether crimes such as yours should not come before Fielding:
For giving advice that is not worth a straw,
May well be call'd picking of pockets in law;
And picking of pockets, with which I now charge ye,
Is, by quinto Elizabeth, Death without Clergy.
What justice, when both to the Old Bailey brought!
By the gods, I 'll enjoy it, tho' 't is but in thought!
Both are plac'd at the bar, with all proper decorum,
With bunches of fennel, and nosegays before 'em:
Both cover their faces with mobs and all that,
But the judge bids them, angrily, take off their hat.
When uncover'd, a buzz of inquiry runs round,

'Pray what are their crimes?' . . 'They 've been pilfering found.'
'But, pray, who have they pilfer'd?' . . 'A doctor, I hear.'
'*What, you solemn-faced, odd-looking man that stands near?*'
'The same.' . . 'What a pity! how does it surprise one,
Two handsomer culprits I never set eyes on!'
Then their friends all come round me with cringing and leering,
To melt me to pity, and soften my swearing.
First Sir Charles advances with phrases well-strung,
'Consider, dear Doctor, the girls are but young.'
'The younger the worse,' I return him again,
'It shows that their habits are all dyed in grain.'
'But then they 're so handsome, one's bosom it grieves.'
'What signifies *handsome*, when people are thieves?'
'But where is your justice? their cases are hard.'
'What signifies *justice?* I want the *reward*.

"'There 's the parish of Edmonton offers forty pounds; there 's the parish of St. Leonard Shoreditch offers forty pounds; there 's the parish of Tyburn, from the Hog-in-the-pound to St. Giles's watch-house, offers forty pounds, — I shall have all that if I convict them!' —

"'But consider their case, . . it may yet be your own!
And see how they kneel! Is your heart made of stone?'
This moves: . . so at last I agree to relent,
For ten pounds in hand, and ten pounds to be spent.

"I challenge you all to answer this: I tell you, you cannot. It cuts deep. But now for the rest of the letter: and next — but I want room — so I believe I shall battle the rest out at Barton some day next week. — I don't value you all! O. G."

We regret that we have no record of this Christmas visit to Barton; that the poet had no Boswell to follow at his heels, and take note of all his sayings and doings. We can only picture him in our minds, casting off all care; enacting the lord of misrule; presiding at the Christmas

revels ; providing all kinds of merriment ; keeping the card-table in an uproar, and finally opening the ball on the first day of the year in his spring-velvet suit, with the Jessamy Bride for a partner.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. How do Goldsmith's letters to his friends compare with most of the letters sent from one friend to another in the circle of your acquaintance?

2. Is Irving consistent in blaming Boswell for being a prying, inquisitive person, and then wishing there had been a Boswell at Barton to record Goldsmith's sayings and doings during his Christmas visit?

CHAPTER XXXVII

Theatrical Delays — Negotiations with Colman — Letter to Garrick — Croaking of the Manager — Naming of the Play — "She Stoops to Conquer" — Foote's Primitive Puppet-Show, "Piety in Pattens" — First Performance of the Comedy — Agitation of the Author — Success — Colman Squibbed out of Town.

The gay life depicted in the two last chapters, while it kept Goldsmith in a state of continual excitement, aggravated the malady which was impairing his constitution; yet his increasing perplexities in money-matters drove him to the dissipation of society as a relief from solitary care. The delays of the theatre added to those perplexities. He had long since finished his new comedy, yet the year 1772 passed away without his being able to get it on the stage. No one, uninitiated in the interior of a theatre, that little world of traps and trickery, can have any idea of the obstacles and perplexities multiplied in the way of the most eminent and successful author by the mismanagement of managers, the jealousies and intrigues of rival authors, and the fantastic and impertinent caprices of actors. A long and baffling negotiation was carried on between Goldsmith and Colman, the manager of Covent Garden; who retained the play in his hands until the middle of January, (1773,) without coming to a decision. The theatrical season was rapidly passing away, and Goldsmith's pecuniary difficulties were augmenting and pressing on him. We may judge of his anxiety by the following letter: —

"*To George Colman, Esq.*

"DEAR SIR, —

"I entreat you 'll relieve me from that state of suspense in which I have been kept for a long time. Whatever

objections you have made or shall make to my play, I will endeavor to remove and not argue about them. To bring in any new judges either of its merits or faults I can never submit to. Upon a former occasion, when my other play was before Mr. Garrick, he offered to bring me before Mr. Whitehead's tribunal, but I refused the proposal with indignation: I hope I shall not experience as harsh treatment from you as from him. I have, as you know, a large sum of money to make up shortly; by accepting my play, I can readily satisfy my creditor that way; at any rate, I must look about to some certainty to be prepared. For God's sake take the play, and let us make the best of it, and let me have the same measure, at least, which you have given as bad plays as mine.

"I am your friend and servant,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

Colman returned the manuscript with the blank sides of the leaves scored with disparaging comments, and suggested alterations, but with the intimation that the faith of the theatre should be kept, and the play acted notwithstanding. Goldsmith submitted the criticisms to some of his friends, who pronounced them trivial, unfair, and contemptible, and intimated that Colman, being a dramatic writer himself, might be actuated by jealousy. The play was then sent, with Colman's comments written on it, to Garrick; but he had scarce sent it when Johnson interfered, represented the evil that might result from an apparent rejection of it by Covent Garden, and undertook to go forthwith to Colman, and have a talk with him on the subject. Goldsmith, therefore, penned the following note to Garrick: —

"DEAR SIR, —

"I ask many pardons for the trouble I gave you yesterday. Upon more mature deliberation, and the advice of

a sensible friend, I began to think it indelicate in me to throw upon you the odium of confirming Mr. Colman's sentence. I therefore request you will send my play back by my servant; for having been assured of having it acted at the other house, though I confess yours in every respect more to my wish, yet it would be folly in me to forego an advantage which lies in my power of appealing from Mr. Colman's opinion to the judgment of the town. I entreat, if not too late, you will keep this affair a secret for some time. "I am, dear Sir, your very humble servant,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

The negotiation of Johnson with the manager of Covent Garden was effective. "Colman," he says, "was prevailed on at last, by much solicitation, nay, a kind of force," to bring forward the comedy. Still the manager was ungenerous, or at least indiscreet enough to express his opinion that it would not reach a second representation. The plot, he said, was bad, and the interest not sustained; "it dwindled, and dwindled, and at last went out like the snuff of a candle." The effect of his croaking was soon apparent within the walls of the theatre. Two of the most popular actors, Woodward and Gentleman Smith, to whom the parts of Tony Lumpkin and Young Marlow were assigned, refused to act them; one of them alleging, in excuse, the evil predictions of the manager. Goldsmith was advised to postpone the performance of his play until he could get these important parts well supplied. "No," said he, "I would sooner that my play were damned by bad players than merely saved by good acting."

Quick was substituted for Woodward in Tony Lumpkin, and Lee Lewis, the harlequin of the theatre, for Gentleman Smith in Young Marlow; and both did justice to their parts.

Great interest was taken by Goldsmith's friends in the success of his piece. The rehearsals were attended by Johnson, Cradock, Murphy, Reynolds and his sister, and the whole Horneck connection, including, of course, the *Jessamy Bride*, whose presence may have contributed to flutter the anxious heart of the author. The rehearsals went off with great applause; but that Colman attributed to the partiality of friends. He continued to croak, and refused to risk any expense in new scenery or dresses on a play which he was sure would prove a failure.

The time was at hand for the first representation, and as yet the comedy was without a title. "We are all in labor for a name for Goldy's play," said Johnson, who, as usual, took a kind of fatherly protecting interest in poor Goldsmith's affairs. "The Old House a New Inn" was thought of for a time, but still did not please. Sir Joshua Reynolds proposed "The Belle's Stratagem," an elegant title, but not considered applicable, the perplexities of the comedy being produced by the mistake of the hero, not the stratagem of the heroine. The name was afterwards adopted by Mrs. Cowley for one of her comedies. "The Mistakes of a Night" was the title at length fixed upon, to which Goldsmith prefixed the words, "She Stoops to Conquer."

The evil bodings of Colman still continued: they were even communicated in the box-office to the servant of the Duke of Gloucester, who was sent to engage a box. Never did the play of a popular writer struggle into existence through more difficulties.

In the mean time Foote's "Primitive Puppet-Show," entitled the "Handsome Housemaid, or Piety in Pattens," had been brought out at the Haymarket on the 15th of February. All the world, fashionable and unfashionable, had crowded to the theatre. The street was thronged with

equipages, — the doors were stormed by the mob. The burlesque was completely successful, and sentimental comedy received its quietus. Even Garrick, who had recently befriended it, now gave it a kick, as he saw it going downhill, and sent Goldsmith a humorous prologue to help his comedy of the opposite school. Garrick and Goldsmith, however, were now on very cordial terms, to which the social meetings in the circle of the Hornecks and Bunburys may have contributed.

On the 15th of March the new comedy was to be performed. Those who had stood up for its merits, and been irritated and disgusted by the treatment it had received from the manager, determined to muster their forces, and aid in giving it a good launch upon the town. The particulars of this confederation, and of its triumphant success, are amusingly told by Cumberland in his memoirs.

"We were not over-sanguine of success, but perfectly determined to struggle hard for our author. We accordingly assembled our strength at the Shakspeare Tavern, in a considerable body, for an early dinner, where Samuel Johnson took the chair at the head of a long table, and was the life and soul of the corps; the poet took post silently by his side, with the Burkes, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Fitzherbert, Caleb Whitefoord, and a phalanx of North British, predetermined applauders, under the banner of Major Mills, — all good men and true. Our illustrious president was in inimitable glee; and poor Goldsmith that day took all his raillery as patiently and complacently as my friend Boswell would have done any day or every day of his life. In the mean time we did not forget our duty; and though we had a better comedy going, in which Johnson was chief actor, we betook ourselves in good time to our separate and allotted posts, and waited the awful drawing up of the curtain. As our stations were preconcerted, so were our signals for plaudits

arranged and determined upon in a manner that gave every one his cue where to look for them, and how to follow them up.

"We had among us a very worthy and efficient member, long since lost to his friends and the world at large, Adam Drummond, of amiable memory, who was gifted by nature with the most sonorous, and at the same time the most contagious laugh that ever echoed from the human lungs. The neighing of the horse of the son of Hystaspes was a whisper to it; the whole thunder of the theatre could not drown it. This kind and ingenious friend fairly forewarned us that he knew no more when to give his fire than the cannon did that was planted on a battery. He desired, therefore, to have a flapper at his elbow, and I had the honor to be deputed to that office. I planted him in an upper box, pretty nearly over the stage, in full view of the pit and galleries, and perfectly well situated to give the echo all its play through the hollows and recesses of the theatre. The success of our manœuvre was complete. All eyes were upon Johnson, who sat in a front row of a side-box; and when he laughed, everybody thought themselves warranted to roar. In the mean time, my friend followed signals with a rattle so irresistibly comic, that, when he had repeated it several times, the attention of the spectators was so engrossed by his person and performances, that the progress of the play seemed likely to become a secondary object, and I found it prudent to insinuate to him that he might halt his music without any prejudice to the author; but alas! it was now too late to rein him in; he had laughed upon my signal where he found no joke, and now, unluckily, he fancied that he found a joke in almost everything that was said; so that nothing in nature could be more mal-apropos than some of his bursts every now and then were. These were dangerous moments, for the pit began to take umbrage; but we carried

our point through, and triumphed not only over Colman's judgment, but our own."

Much of this statement has been condemned as exaggerated or discolored. Cumberland's memoirs have generally been characterized as partaking of romance, and in the present instance he had particular motives for tampering with the truth. He was a dramatic writer himself, jealous of the success of a rival, and anxious to have it attributed to the private management of friends. According to various accounts, public and private, such management was unnecessary, for the piece was "received throughout with the greatest acclamations."

Goldsmith, in the present instance, had not dared, as on a former occasion, to be present at the first performance. He had been so overcome by his apprehensions that, at the preparatory dinner, he could hardly utter a word, and was so choked that he could not swallow a mouthful. When his friends trooped to the theatre, he stole away to St. James's Park : there he was found by a friend, between seven and eight o'clock, wandering up and down the Mall like a troubled spirit. With difficulty he was persuaded to go to the theatre, where his presence might be important should any alteration be necessary. He arrived at the opening of the fifth act, and made his way behind the scenes. Just as he entered there was a slight hiss at the improbability of Tony Lumpkin's trick on his mother, in persuading her she was forty miles off, on Crackskull Common, though she had been trundled about on her own grounds. "What 's that? what 's that!" cried Goldsmith to the manager, in great agitation. "Pshaw! Doctor," replied Colman, sarcastically, "don't be frightened at a squib, when we 've been sitting these two hours on a barrel of gunpowder!" Though of a most forgiving nature, Goldsmith did not easily forget this ungracious and ill-timed sally.

If Colman was indeed actuated by the paltry motives ascribed to him in his treatment of this play, he was most amply punished by its success, and by the taunts, epigrams, and censures levelled at him through the press, in which his false prophecies were jeered at, his critical judgment called in question, and he was openly taxed with literary jealousy. So galling and unremitting was the fire, that he at length wrote to Goldsmith, entreating him "to take him off the rack of the newspapers"; in the mean time, to escape the laugh that was raised about him in the theatrical world of London, he took refuge in Bath during the triumphant career of the comedy.

The following is one of the many squibs which assailed the ears of the manager: —

TO GEORGE COLMAN, ESQ.

ON THE SUCCESS OF DR. GOLDSMITH'S NEW COMEDY

"Come, Coley, doff those mourning weeds,
Nor thus with jokes be flamm'd;
Tho' Goldsmith's present play succeeds,
His next may still be damn'd.

As this has 'scaped without a fall,
To sink his next prepare;
New actors hire from Wapping Wall
And dresses from Rag Fair.

For scenes let tatter'd blankets fly,
The prologue Kelly write;
Then swear again the piece must die
Before the author's night.

Should these tricks fail, the lucky elf,
To bring to lasting shame,
E'en write *the best you can yourself*,
And print it in *his name*."

The solitary hiss, which had startled Goldsmith, was ascribed by some of the newspaper scribblers to Cumberland himself, who was "manifestly miserable" at the delight of the audience, or to Ossian Macpherson, who was hostile to the whole Johnson clique, or to Goldsmith's dramatic rival, Kelly. The following is one of the epigrams which appeared: —

"At Dr. Goldsmith's merry play,
All the spectators laugh, they say;
The assertion, sir, I must deny,
For Cumberland and Kelly cry.
Ride, si sapis."

Another, addressed to Goldsmith, alludes to Kelly's early apprenticeship to stay-making: —

"If Kelly finds fault with the *shape* of your muse,
And thinks that too loosely it plays,
He surely, dear Doctor, will never refuse
To make it a new *Pair of Stays!*"

Cradock had returned to the country before the production of the play; the following letter, written just after the performance, gives an additional picture of the thorns which beset an author in the path of theatrical literature: —

"My dear Sir, —

"The play has met with a success much beyond your expectations or mine. I thank you sincerely for your epilogue, which, however, could not be used, but with your permission shall be printed. The story in short is this. Murphy sent me rather the outline of an epilogue than an epilogue, which was to be sung by Mrs. Catley, and which she approved; Mrs. Bulkley, hearing this, insisted on throwing up her part" (*Miss Hardcastle*) "unless, according to the custom of the theatre, she were permitted to speak the epilogue. In this embarrassment I thought of making a

quarrelling epilogue between Catley and her, debating *who* should speak the epilogue; but then Mrs. Catley refused after I had taken the trouble of drawing it out. I was then at a loss indeed; an epilogue was to be made, and for none but Mrs. Bulkley. I made one, and Colman thought it too bad to be spoken; I was obliged, therefore, to try a fourth time, and I made a very mawkish thing, as you 'll shortly see. Such is the history of my stage adventures, and which I have at last done with. I cannot help saying that I am very sick of the stage; and though I believe I shall get three tolerable benefits, yet I shall, on the whole, be a loser, even in a pecuniary light; my ease and comfort I certainly lost while it was in agitation.

"I am, my dear Cradock, your obliged and obedient servant, "OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"P. S. — Present my most humble respects to Mrs. Cradock."

Johnson, who had taken such a conspicuous part in promoting the interest of poor "Goldy," was triumphant at the success of the piece. "I know of no comedy for many years," said he, "that has so much exhilarated an audience; that has answered so much the great end of comedy — making an audience merry."

Goldsmith was happy, also, in gleaning applause from less authoritative sources. Northcote, the painter, then a youthful pupil of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Ralph, Sir Joshua's confidential man, had taken their stations in the gallery to lead the applause in that quarter. Goldsmith asked Northcote's opinion of the play. The youth modestly declared he could not presume to judge in such matters. "Did it make you laugh?" "Oh, exceedingly!" "That is all I require," replied Goldsmith; and rewarded him for his criticism by box-tickets for his first benefit-night.

The comedy was immediately put to press, and dedicated to Johnson in the following grateful and affectionate terms: —

"In inscribing this slight performance to you, I do not mean so much to compliment you as myself. It may do me some honor to inform the public that I have lived many years in intimacy with you. It may serve the interests of mankind also to inform them, that the greatest wit may be found in a character, without impairing the most unaffected piety."

The copyright was transferred to Mr. Newbery, according to agreement, whose profits on the sale of the work far exceeded the debts for which the author in his perplexities had preëngaged it. The sum which accrued to Goldsmith from his benefit-nights afforded but a slight palliation of his pecuniary difficulties. His friends, while they exulted in his success, little knew of his continually increasing embarrassments, and of the anxiety of mind which kept tasking his pen while it impaired the ease and freedom of spirit necessary to felicitous composition.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Relate why Goldsmith should be "sick of the stage."

2. Are persons ever hired in these days to applaud a play on its first presentation?

3. The first performance of "She Stoops to Conquer."

CHAPTER XXXVIII

A Newspaper Attack — The Evans Affray — Johnson's Comment.

The triumphant success of "She Stoops to Conquer" brought forth, of course, those carpings and cavillings of underling scribblers, which are the thorns and briers in the path of successful authors. Goldsmith, though easily nettled by attacks of the kind, was at present too well satisfied with the reception of his comedy to heed them; but the following anonymous letter, which appeared in a public paper, was not to be taken with equal equanimity: —

(*For the London Packet.*)

"TO DR. GOLDSMITH.

"*Vous vous noyez par vanité.*

"Sir, — The happy knack which you have learned of puffing your own compositions provokes me to come forth. You have not been the editor of newspapers and magazines not to discover the trick of literary *humbug;* but the gauze is so thin that the very foolish part of the world see through it, and discover the doctor's monkey-face and cloven foot. Your poetic vanity is as unpardonable as your personal. Would man believe it, and will woman bear it, to be told that for hours the great Goldsmith will stand surveying his grotesque orang-outang's figure in a pier-glass? Was but the lovely H—k as much enamored, you would not sigh, my gentle swain, in vain. But your vanity is preposterous. How will this same bard of Bedlam ring the changes in the praise of Goldy! But what has he to be either proud or vain of? 'The Traveller' is a flimsy poem, built upon false

principles — principles diametrically opposite to liberty. What is 'The Good-natured Man' but a poor, water-gruel dramatic dose? What is 'The Deserted Village' but a pretty poem of easy numbers, without fancy, dignity, genius, or fire? And, pray, what may be the last *speaking pantomime,* so praised by the Doctor himself, but an incoherent piece of stuff, the figure of a woman with a fish's tail, without plot, incident, or intrigue? We are made to laugh at stale, dull jokes, wherein we mistake pleasantry for wit, and grimace for humor; wherein every scene is unnatural and inconsistent with the rules, the laws of nature and of the drama; viz: two gentlemen come to a man of fortune's house, eat, drink, &c., and take it for an inn. The one is intended as a lover for the daughter; he talks with her for some hours; and, when he sees her again in a different dress, he treats her as a bar-girl, and swears she squinted. He abuses the master of the house, and threatens to kick him out of his own doors. The squire, whom we are told is to be a fool, proves to be the most sensible being of the piece; and he makes out a whole act by bidding his mother lie close behind a bush, persuading her that his father, her own husband, is a highwayman, and that he has come to cut their throats; and, to give his cousin an opportunity to go off, he drives his mother over hedges, ditches, and through ponds. There is not, sweet, sucking Johnson, a natural stroke in the whole play but the young fellow's giving the stolen jewels to the mother, supposing her to be the landlady. That Mr. Colman did no justice to this piece, I honestly allow; that he told all his friends it would be damned, I positively aver; and, from such ungenerous insinuations, without a dramatic merit, it rose to public notice, and it is now the ton to go and see it, though I never saw a person that either liked it or approved it, any more than the absurd plot of Home's tragedy of 'Alonzo.'

Mr. Goldsmith, correct your arrogance, reduce your vanity, and endeavor to believe, as a man, you are of the plainest sort, — and as an author, but a mortal piece of mediocrity.

"Brise le miroir infidèle
Qui vous cache la vérité.

"TOM TICKLE."

It would be difficult to devise a letter more calculated to wound the peculiar sensibilities of Goldsmith. The attacks upon him as an author, though annoying enough, he could have tolerated; but then the allusion to his "grotesque" person, to his studious attempts to adorn it; and, above all, to his being an unsuccessful admirer of the lovely H—k (the Jessamy Bride), struck rudely upon the most sensitive part of his highly sensitive nature. The paragraph, it is said, was first pointed out to him by an officious friend, an Irishman, who told him he was bound in honor to resent it; but he needed no such prompting. He was in a high state of excitement and indignation, and, accompanied by his friend, who is said to have been a Captain Higgins, of the marines, he repaired to Paternoster Row, to the shop of Evans, the publisher, whom he supposed to be the editor of the paper. Evans was summoned by his shopman from an adjoining room. Goldsmith announced his name. "I have called," added he, "in consequence of a scurrilous attack made upon me, and an unwarrantable liberty taken with the name of a young lady. As for myself, I care little; but her name must not be sported with."

Evans professed utter ignorance of the matter, and said he would speak to the editor. He stooped to examine a file of the paper, in search of the offensive article; whereupon Goldsmith's friend gave him a signal, that now was a favorable moment for the exercise of his cane. The hint was taken as quick as given, and the cane was vigorously applied

to the back of the stooping publisher. The latter rallied in an instant, and, being a stout, high-blooded Welshman, returned the blows with interest. A lamp hanging overhead was broken, and sent down a shower of oil upon the combatants; but the battle raged with unceasing fury. The shopman ran off for a constable; but Dr. Kenrick, who happened to be in the adjacent room, sallied forth, interfered between the combatants, and put an end to the affray. He conducted Goldsmith to a coach, in exceedingly battered and tattered plight, and accompanied him home, soothing him with much mock commiseration, though he was generally suspected, and on good grounds, to be the author of the libel.

Evans immediately instituted a suit against Goldsmith for an assault, but was ultimately prevailed upon to compromise the matter, the poet contributing fifty pounds to the Welsh charity.

Newspapers made themselves, as may well be supposed, exceedingly merry with the combat. Some censured him severely for invading the sanctity of a man's own house; others accused him of having, in his former capacity of editor of a magazine, been guilty of the very offences that he now resented in others. This drew from him the following vindication:—

"*To the Public.*

"Lest it should be supposed that I have been willing to correct in others an abuse of which I have been guilty myself, I beg leave to declare, that, in all my life, I never wrote or dictated a single paragraph, letter, or essay in a newspaper, except a few moral essays under the character of a Chinese, about ten years ago, in the 'Ledger,' and a letter, to which I signed my name, in the 'St. James's Chronicle.' If the liberty of the press, therefore, has been abused, I have had no hand in it.

"I have always considered the press as the protector of our freedom, as a watchful guardian, capable of uniting the weak against the encroachments of power. What concerns the public most properly admits of a public discussion. But, of late, the press has turned from defending public interest to making inroads upon private life; from combating the strong to overwhelming the feeble. No condition is now too obscure for its abuse and the protector has become the tyrant of the people. In this manner the freedom of the press is beginning to sow the seeds of its own dissolution; the great must oppose it from principle, and the weak from fear; till at last every rank of mankind shall be found to give up its benefits, content with security from insults.

"How to put a stop to this licentiousness, by which all are indiscriminately abused, and by which vice consequently escapes in the general censure, I am unable to tell; all I could wish is, that, as the law gives us no protection against the injury, so it should give calumniators no shelter after having provoked correction. The insults which we receive before the public, by being more open, are the more distressing; by treating them with silent contempt we do not pay a sufficient deference to the opinion of the world. By recurring to legal redress we too often expose the weakness of the law, which only serves to increase our mortification by failing to relieve us. In short, every man should singly consider himself as the guardian of the liberty of the press, and, as far as his influence can extend, should endeavor to prevent its licentiousness becoming at last the grave of its freedom.

"Oliver Goldsmith."

Boswell, who had just arrived in town, met with this article in a newspaper which he found at Dr. Johnson's. The Doctor was from home at the time, and Bozzy and Mrs. Williams, in a critical conference over the letter, determined from the

style that it must have been written by the lexicographer himself. The latter on his return soon undeceived them. "Sir," said he to Boswell, "Goldsmith would no more have asked me to have wrote such a thing as that for him than he would have asked me to feed him with a spoon, or do anything else that denoted his imbecility. Sir, had he shown it to any one friend, he would not have been allowed to publish it. He has, indeed, done it very well; but it is a foolish thing well done. I suppose he has been so much elated with the success of his new comedy, that he has thought everything that concerned him must be of importance to the public."

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Using details given elsewhere regarding the looks and dress of Goldsmith at this period, write an imaginary picture of Goldsmith at the moment when he began to cane Evans.

2. What was Boswell's nickname? Goldsmith's? Johnson's? Burke's? Do the characters of history seem more real to you when you know their nicknames?

CHAPTER XXXIX

Boswell in Holy-Week — Dinner at Oglethorpe's — Dinner at Paoli's — The Policy of Truth — Goldsmith affects Independence of Royalty — Paoli's Compliment — Johnson's Eulogium on the Fiddle — Question about Suicide — Boswell's Subserviency.

The return of Boswell to town to his task of noting down the conversations of Johnson, enables us to glean from his journal some scanty notices of Goldsmith. It was now Holy-Week, a time during which Johnson was particularly solemn in his manner and strict in his devotions. Boswell, who was the imitator of the great moralist in everything, assumed, of course, an extra devoutness on the present occasion. "He had an odd mock solemnity of tone and manner," said Miss Burney (afterwards Madame D'Arblay), "which he had acquired from constantly thinking, and imitating Dr. Johnson." It would seem that he undertook to deal out some second-hand homilies, *à la Johnson*, for the edification of Goldsmith during Holy-Week. The poet, whatever might be his religious feeling, had no disposition to be schooled by so shallow an apostle. "Sir," said he in reply, "as I take my shoes from the shoemaker, and my coat from the tailor, so I take my religion from the priest."

Boswell treasured up the reply in his memory or his memorandum-book. A few days afterwards, the 9th of April, he kept Good Friday with Dr. Johnson, in orthodox style; breakfasted with him on tea and cross-buns; went to church with him morning and evening; fasted in the interval, and read with him in the Greek Testament: then, in the piety of his heart, complained of the sore rebuff he had met with in the course of his religious exhortations to the

poet, and lamented that the latter should indulge in "this loose way of talking." "Sir," replied Johnson, "Goldsmith knows nothing — he has made up his mind about nothing."

This reply seems to have gratified the lurking jealousy of Boswell, and he has recorded it in his journal. Johnson, however, with respect to Goldsmith, and indeed with respect to everybody else, blew hot as well as cold, according to the humor he was in. Boswell, who was astonished and piqued at the continually increasing celebrity of the poet, observed some time after to Johnson, in a tone of surprise, that Goldsmith had acquired more fame than all the officers of the last war who were not generals. "Why, sir," answered Johnson, his old feeling of good-will working uppermost, "you will find ten thousand fit to do what they did, before you find one to do what Goldsmith has done. You must consider that a thing is valued according to its rarity. A pebble that paves the street is in itself more useful than the diamond upon a lady's finger."

On the 13th of April we find Goldsmith and Johnson at the table of old General Oglethorpe, discussing the question of the degeneracy of the human race. Goldsmith asserts the fact, and attributes it to the influence of luxury. Johnson denies the fact, and observes, that, even admitting it, luxury could not be the cause. It reached but a small proportion of the human race. Soldiers, on sixpence a day, could not indulge in luxuries; the poor and laboring classes, forming the great mass of mankind, were out of its sphere. Wherever it could reach them, it strengthened them and rendered them prolific. The conversation was not of particular force or point as reported by Boswell; the dinner-party was a very small one, in which there was no provocation to intellectual display.

After dinner they took tea with the ladies, where we find poor Goldsmith happy and at home, singing Tony Lumpkin's

song of the "Three Jolly Pigeons," and another, called the "Humors of Ballamaguery," to a very pretty Irish tune. It was to have been introduced in "She Stoops to Conquer," but was left out, as the actress who played the heroine could not sing.

It was in these genial moments that the sunshine of Goldsmith's nature would break out, and he would say and do a thousand whimsical and agreeable things that made him the life of the strictly social circle. Johnson, with whom conversation was everything, used to judge Goldsmith too much by his own colloquial standard, and undervalue him for being less provided than himself with acquired facts, the ammunition of the tongue and often the mere lumber of the memory; others, however, valued him for the native felicity of his thoughts, however carelessly expressed, and for certain good-fellow qualities, less calculated to dazzle than to endear. "It is amazing," said Johnson one day, after he himself had been talking like an oracle; "it is amazing how little Goldsmith knows; he seldom comes where he is not more ignorant than any one else." "Yet," replied Sir Joshua Reynolds, with affectionate promptness, "there is no man whose company is more *liked*."

Two or three days after the dinner at General Oglethorpe's, Goldsmith met Johnson again at the table of General Paoli, the hero of Corsica. Martinelli, of Florence, author of an Italian History of England, was among the guests; as was Boswell, to whom we are indebted for minutes of the conversation which took place. The question was debated whether Martinelli should continue his history down to that day. "To be sure he should," said Goldsmith. "No, sir," cried Johnson, "it would give great offence. He would have to tell of almost all the living great what they did not wish told." Goldsmith. — "It may, perhaps, be necessary for a native to be more cautious; but a foreigner, who comes

among us without prejudice, may be considered as holding the place of a judge, and may speak his mind freely." Johnson. — "Sir, a foreigner, when he sends a work from the press, ought to be on his guard against catching the error and mistaken enthusiasm of the people among whom he happens to be." Goldsmith. — "Sir, he wants only to sell his history, and to tell truth; one an honest, the other a laudable motive." Johnson. — "Sir, they are both laudable motives. It is laudable in a man to wish to live by his labors; but he should write so as he may *live* by them, not so as he may be knocked on the head. I would advise him to be at Calais before he publishes his history of the present age. A foreigner who attaches himself to a political party in this country is in the worst state that can be imagined; he is looked upon as a mere intermeddler. A native may do it from interest." Boswell. — "Or principle." Goldsmith. — "There are people who tell a hundred political lies every day, and are not hurt by it. Surely, then, one may tell truth with perfect safety." Johnson. — "Why, sir, in the first place, he who tells a hundred lies has disarmed the force of his lies. But, besides, a man had rather have a hundred lies told of him than one truth which he does not wish to be told." Goldsmith. — "For my part, I 'd tell the truth, and shame the devil." Johnson. — "Yes, sir, but the devil will be angry. I wish to shame the devil as much as you do, but I should choose to be out of the reach of his claws." Goldsmith. — "His claws can do you no hurt where you have the shield of truth."

This last reply was one of Goldsmith's lucky hits, and closed the argument in his favor.

"We talked," writes Boswell, "of the King's coming to see Goldsmith's new play." "I wish he would," said Goldsmith, adding, however, with an affected indifference, "not that it would do me the least good." "Well, then," cried

Johnson, laughing, "let us say it would do *him* good. No, sir, this affectation will not pass, — it is mighty idle. In such a state as ours, who would not wish to please the chief magistrate?"

"I *do* wish to please him," rejoined Goldsmith. "I remember a line in Dryden: —

"'And every poet is the monarch's friend;'

it ought to be reversed." "Nay," said Johnson, "there are finer lines in Dryden on this subject:

"'For colleges on bounteous kings depend,
And never rebel was to arts a friend.'"

General Paoli observed that "successful rebels might be." "Happy rebellions," interjected Martinelli. "We have no such phrase," cried Goldsmith. "But have you not the thing?" asked Paoli. "Yes," replied Goldsmith, "all our *happy* revolutions. They have hurt our constitution, and *will* hurt it, till we mend it by another HAPPY REVOLUTION." This was a sturdy sally of Jacobitism, that quite surprised Boswell, but must have been relished by Johnson.

General Paoli mentioned a passage in the play, which had been construed into a compliment to a lady of distinction, whose marriage with the Duke of Cumberland had excited the strong disapprobation of the King as a mesalliance. Boswell, to draw Goldsmith out, pretended to think the compliment unintentional. The poet smiled and hesitated. The General came to his relief. "Monsieur Goldsmith," said he, "est comme la mer, qui jette des perles et beaucoup d'autres belles choses, sans s'en appercevoir." (Mr. Goldsmith is like the sea, which casts forth pearls and many other beautiful things without perceiving it.)

"Très-bien dit, et très-élégamment," (very well said, and very elegantly,) exclaimed Goldsmith, delighted with so beautiful a compliment from such a quarter.

Johnson spoke disparagingly of the learning of Mr. Harris, of Salisbury, and doubted his being a good Grecian. "He is what is much better," cried Goldsmith, with prompt good-nature, — "he is a worthy, humane man." "Nay, sir," rejoined the logical Johnson, "that is not to the purpose of our argument; that will prove that he can play upon the fiddle as well as Giardini, as that he is an eminent Grecian." Goldsmith found he had got into a scrape, and seized upon Giardini to help him out of it. "The greatest musical performers," said he, dexterously turning the conversation, "have but small emoluments; Giardini, I am told, does not get above seven hundred a year." "That is indeed but little for a man to get," observed Johnson, "who does best that which so many endeavor to do. There is nothing, I think, in which the power of art is shown so much as in playing on the fiddle. In all other things we can do something at first. Any man will forge a bar of iron, if you give him a hammer; not so well as a smith, but tolerably. A man will saw a piece of wood, and make a box, though a clumsy one; but give him a fiddle and fiddlestick, and he can do nothing."

This, upon the whole, though reported by the one-sided Boswell, is a tolerable specimen of the conversations of Goldsmith and Johnson; the former heedless, often illogical, always on the kind-hearted side of the question, and prone to redeem himself by lucky hits; the latter closely argumentative, studiously sententious, often profound, and sometimes laboriously prosaic.

They had an argument a few days later at Mr. Thrale's table, on the subject of suicide. "Do you think, sir," said Boswell, "that all who commit suicide are mad?" "Sir," replied Johnson, "they are not often universally disordered in their intellects, but one passion presses so upon them that they yield to it, and commit suicide, as a passionate

man will stab another. I have often thought," added he, "that after a man has taken the resolution to kill himself, it is not courage in him to do anything, however desperate, because he has nothing to fear." "I don't see that," observed Goldsmith. "Nay, but, my dear sir," rejoined Johnson, "why should you not see what every one else does?" "It is," replied Goldsmith, "for fear of something that he has resolved to kill himself; and will not that timid disposition restrain him?" "It does not signify," pursued Johnson, "that the fear of something made him resolve; it is upon the state of his mind, after the resolution is taken, that I argue. Suppose a man, either from fear, or pride, or conscience, or whatever motive, has resolved to kill himself; when once the resolution is taken he has nothing to fear. He may then go and take the King of Prussia by the nose at the head of his army. He cannot fear the rack who is determined to kill himself." Boswell reports no more of the discussion, though Goldsmith might have continued it with advantage: for the very timid disposition, which through fear of something was impelling the man to commit suicide, might restrain him from an act involving the punishment of the rack, more terrible to him than death itself.

It is to be regretted in all these reports by Boswell, we have scarcely anything but the remarks of Johnson; it is only by accident that he now and then gives us the observations of others, when they are necessary to explain or set off those of his hero. "When in *that presence*," says Miss Burney, "he was unobservant, if not contemptuous of every one else. In truth, when he met with Dr. Johnson, he commonly forebore even answering anything that was said, or attending to anything that went forward, lest he should miss the smallest sound from that voice, to which he paid such exclusive, though merited homage. But the moment

that voice burst forth, the attention which it excited on Mr. Boswell amounted almost to pain. His eyes goggled with eagerness; he leant his ear almost on the shoulder of the Doctor; and his mouth dropped open to catch every syllable that might be uttered; nay, he seemed not only to dread losing a word, but to be anxious not to miss a breathing, as if hoping from it latently, or mystically, some information."

On one occasion the Doctor detected Boswell, or Bozzy, as he called him, eavesdropping behind his chair, as he was conversing with Miss Burney at Mr. Thrale's table. "What are you doing there, sir?" cried he, turning round angrily, and clapping his hand upon his knee. "Go to the table, sir."

Boswell obeyed with an air of affright and submission, which raised a smile on every face. Scarce had he taken his seat, however, at a distance, than, impatient to get again at the side of Johnson, he rose and was running off in quest of something to show him, when the Doctor roared after him authoritatively, "What are you thinking of, sir? Why do you get up before the cloth is removed? Come back to your place, sir;" — and the obsequious spaniel did as he was commanded. — "Running about in the middle of meals!" muttered the Doctor, pursing his mouth at the same time to restrain his rising risibility.

Boswell got another rebuff from Johnson, which would have demolished any other man. He had been teasing him with many direct questions, such as, "What did you do, sir? — What did you say, sir?" until the great philologist became perfectly enraged. "I will not be put to the *question!*" roared he. "Don't you consider, sir, that these are not the manners of a gentleman? I will not be baited with *what* and *why;* — What is this? What is that? Why is a cow's tail long? Why is a fox's tail bushy?" "Why, sir," replied pilgarlick, "you are so good that I venture to trouble you." "Sir," replied Johnson, "my being so *good*

is no reason why you should be so *ill.*" "You have but two topics, sir," exclaimed he on another occasion, "yourself and me, and I am sick of both."

Boswell's inveterate disposition to *toad*, was a sore cause of mortification to his father, the old laird of Auchinleck (or Affleck). He had been annoyed by his extravagant devotion to Paoli, but then he was something of a military hero; but this tagging at the heels of Dr. Johnson, whom he considered a kind of pedagogue, set his Scotch blood in a ferment. "There 's nae hope for Jamie, mon," said he to a friend; — "Jamie is gaen clean gyte. What do you think, mon? He 's done wi' Paoli; he 's off wi' the land-louping scoundrel of a Corsican; and whose tail do you think he has pinn'd himself to now, mon? A *dominie*, mon; an auld dominie; he keeped a schŭle, and cau'd it an acaadamy."

We shall show in the next chapter that Jamie's devotion to the dominie did not go unrewarded.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Would you rather be in the company of a person like Johnson or of one like Goldsmith? Why?

2. Do all parts of this chapter help to develop the general topic of the book, *i.e.*, the life and character of Goldsmith?

3. What are cross buns?

4. How many references are there to "The Three Jolly Pigeons"?

CHAPTER XL

Changes in the Literary Club — Johnson's Objection to Garrick — Election of Boswell.

The Literary Club (as we have termed the club in Gerard Street, though it took that name some time later) had now been in existence several years. Johnson was exceedingly chary at first of its exclusiveness, and opposed to its being augmented in number. Not long after its institution, Sir Joshua Reynolds was speaking of it to Garrick. "I like it much," said little David, briskly; "I think I shall be of you." "When Sir Joshua mentioned this to Dr. Johnson," says Boswell, "he was much displeased with the actor's conceit. '*He'll be of us?*' growled he. 'How does he know we will *permit* him? The first duke in England has no right to hold such language.'"

When Sir John Hawkins spoke favorably of Garrick's pretensions, "Sir," replied Johnson, "he will disturb us by his buffoonery." In the same spirit he declared to Mr. Thrale, that, if Garrick should apply for admission, he would black-ball him. "Who, sir?" exclaimed Thrale, with surprise; "Mr. Garrick — your friend, your companion — black-ball him!" "Why, sir," replied Johnson, "I love my little David dearly — better than all or any of his flatterers do; but surely one ought to sit in a society like ours,

"'Unelbowed by a gamester, pimp, or player.'"

The exclusion from the club was a sore mortification to Garrick, though he bore it without complaining. He could not help continually to ask questions about it — what was

going on there — whether he was ever the subject of conversation. By degrees the rigor of the club relaxed: some of the members grew negligent. Beauclerc lost his right of membership by neglecting to attend. On his marriage, however, with Lady Diana Spencer, daughter of the Duke of Marlborough, and recently divorced from Viscount Bolingbroke, he had claimed and regained his seat in the club. The number of members had likewise been augmented. The proposition to increase it originated with Goldsmith. "It would give," he thought, "an agreeable variety to their meetings; for there can be nothing new amongst us," said he; "we have travelled over each other's minds." Johnson was piqued at the suggestion. "Sir," said he, "you have not travelled over my mind, I promise you." Sir Joshua, less confident in the exhaustless fecundity of his mind, felt and acknowledged the force of Goldsmith's suggestion. Several new members, therefore, had been added; the first, to his great joy, was David Garrick. Goldsmith, who was now on cordial terms with him, had zealously promoted his election, and Johnson had given it his warm approbation. Another new member was Beauclerc's friend, Lord Charlemont; and a still more important one was Mr. (afterwards Sir William) Jones, the famous Orientalist, at that time a young lawyer of the Temple and a distinguished scholar.

To the great astonishment of the club, Johnson now proposed his devoted follower, Boswell, as a member. He did it in a note addressed to Goldsmith, who presided on the evening of the 23d of April. The nomination was seconded by Beauclerc. According to the rules of the club, the ballot would take place at the next meeting (on the 30th); there was an intervening week, therefore, in which to discuss the pretensions of the candidate. We may easily imagine the discussions that took place. Boswell had made himself absurd in such a variety of ways that the very idea of his

admission was exceedingly irksome to some of the members. "The honor of being elected into the Turk's Head Club," said the Bishop of St. Asaph, "is not inferior to that of being representative of Westminster and Surrey;" what had Boswell done to merit such an honor? What chance had he of gaining it? The answer was simple: he had been the persevering worshipper, if not sycophant of Johnson. The great lexicographer had a heart to be won by apparent affection; he stood forth authoritatively in support of his vassal. If asked to state the merits of the candidate, he summed them up in an indefinite but comprehensive word of his own coining: — he was *clubable*. He moreover gave significant hints that if Boswell were kept out he should oppose the admission of any other candidate. No further opposition was made; in fact none of the members had been so fastidious and exclusive in regard to the club as Johnson himself; and if he were pleased, they were easily satisfied: besides, they knew that, with all his faults, Boswell was a cheerful companion, and possessed lively social qualities.

On Friday, when the ballot was to take place, Beauclerc gave a dinner, at his house in the Adelphi, where Boswell met several of the members who were favorable to his election. After dinner the latter adjourned to the club, leaving Boswell in company with Lady Di Beauclerc until the fate of his election should be known. He sat, he says, in a state of anxiety which even the charming conversation of Lady Di could not entirely dissipate. It was not long before tidings were brought of his election, and he was conducted to the place of meeting, where, beside the company he had met at dinner, Burke, Dr. Nugent, Garrick, Goldsmith, and Mr. William Jones were waiting to receive him. The club, notwithstanding all its learned dignity in the eyes of the world, could at times "unbend and play the fool" as well as less important bodies. Some of its jocose conversations

have at times leaked out, and a society in which Goldsmith could venture to sing his song of "an old woman tossed in a blanket," could not be so very staid in its gravity. We may suppose, therefore, the jokes that had been passing among the members while awaiting the arrival of Boswell. Beauclerc himself could not have repressed his disposition for a sarcastic pleasantry. At least we have a right to presume all this from the conduct of Doctor Johnson himself.

With all his gravity he possessed a deep fund of quiet humor, and felt a kind of whimsical responsibility to protect the club from the absurd propensities of the very questionable associate he had thus inflicted on them. Rising, therefore, as Boswell entered, he advanced with a very doctorial air, placed himself behind a chair, on which he leaned as on a desk or pulpit, and then delivered, *ex cathedra*, a mock solemn charge, pointing out the conduct expected from him as a good member of the club; what he was to do, and especially what he was to avoid; including in the latter, no doubt, all those petty, prying, questioning, gossiping, babbling habits which had so often grieved the spirit of the lexicographer. It is to be regretted that Boswell has never thought proper to note down the particulars of this charge, which, from the well-known characters and positions of the parties, might have furnished a parallel to the noted charge of Launcelot Gobbo to his dog.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Boswell's election to the club.

2. Why is Johnson called the great lexicographer?

3. How much is there about Goldsmith in this chapter? Is Irving's book faulty because the author does not tell more concerning Goldsmith in the chapter?

CHAPTER XLI

Dinner at Dilly's — Conversations on Natural History — Intermeddling of Boswell — Dispute about Toleration — Johnson's Rebuff to Goldsmith; His Apology — Man-Worship — Doctors Major and Minor — A Farewell Visit.

A few days after the serio-comic scene of the elevation of Boswell into the Literary Club, we find that indefatigable biographer giving particulars of a dinner at the Dillys', booksellers, in the Poultry, at which he met Goldsmith and Johnson, with several other literary characters. His anecdotes of the conversation, of course, go to glorify Dr. Johnson; for, as he observes in his biography, "his conversation alone, or what led to it, or was interwoven with it, is the business of this work." Still on the present, as on other occasions, he gives unintentional and perhaps unavoidable gleams of Goldsmith's good sense, which show that the latter only wanted a less prejudiced and more impartial reporter, to put down the charge of colloquial incapacity so unjustly fixed upon him. The conversation turned upon the natural history of birds, a beautiful subject, on which the poet, from his recent studies, his habits of observation, and his natural tastes, must have talked with instruction and feeling; yet, though we have much of what Johnson said, we have only a casual remark or two of Goldsmith. One was on the migration of swallows, which he pronounced partial; "the stronger ones," said he, "migrate, the others do not."

Johnson denied to the brute creation the faculty of reason. "Birds," said he, "build by instinct; they never improve; they build their first nest as well as any one they ever build." "Yet we see," observed Goldsmith, "if you take

away a bird's-nest with the eggs in it, she will make a slighter nest and lay again." "Sir," replied Johnson, "that is because at first she has full time, and makes her nest deliberately. In the case you mention, she is pressed to lay, and must, therefore, make her nest quickly, and consequently it will be slight." "The nidification of birds," rejoined Goldsmith, "is what is least known in natural history, though one of the most curious things in it." While conversation was going on in this placid, agreeable, and instructive manner, the eternal meddler and busybody, Boswell, must intrude to put in a brawl. The Dillys were dissenters; two of their guests were dissenting clergymen; another, Mr. Toplady, was a clergyman of the established church. Johnson himself was a zealous, uncompromising churchman. None but a marplot like Boswell would have thought, on such an occasion and in such company, to broach the subject of religious toleration; but, as has been well observed, "it was his perverse inclination to introduce subjects that he hoped would produce difference and debate." In the present instance he gained his point. An animated dispute immediately arose, in which, according to Boswell's report, Johnson monopolized the greater part of the conversation; not always treating the dissenting clergymen with the greatest courtesy, and even once wounding the feelings of the mild and amiable Bennet Langton by his harshness.

Goldsmith mingled a little in the dispute and with some advantage, but was cut short by flat contradictions when most in the right. He sat for a time silent but impatient under such overbearing dogmatism, though Boswell, with his usual misinterpretation, attributes his "restless agitation" to a wish *to get in and shine*. "Finding himself excluded," continues Boswell, "he had taken his hat to go away, but remained for a time with it in his hand, like a gamester who

at the end of a long night lingers for a little while to see if he can have a favorable opportunity to finish with success." Once he was beginning to speak, when he was overpowered by the loud voice of Johnson, who was at the opposite end of the table, and did not perceive his attempt; whereupon he threw down, as it were, his hat and his argument, and, darting an angry glance at Johnson, exclaimed in a bitter tone, "*Take it.*"

Just then one of the disputants was beginning to speak, when, Johnson uttering some sound, as if about to interrupt him, Goldsmith, according to Boswell, seized the opportunity to vent his own *envy and spleen* under pretext of supporting another person. "Sir," said he to Johnson, "the gentleman has heard you patiently for an hour; pray allow us now to hear him." It was a reproof in the lexicographer's own style, and he may have felt that he merited it; but he was not accustomed to be reproved. "Sir," said he, sternly, "I was not interrupting the gentleman; I was only giving him a signal of my attention. Sir, *you are impertinent.*" Goldsmith made no reply, but after some time went away, having another engagement.

That evening, as Boswell was on the way with Johnson and Langton to the club, he seized the occasion to make some disparaging remarks on Goldsmith, which he thought would just then be acceptable to the great lexicographer. "It was a pity," he said, "that Goldsmith would on every occasion endeavor to shine, by which he so often exposed himself." Langton contrasted him with Addison, who, content with the fame of his writings, acknowledged himself unfit for conversation; and on being taxed by a lady with silence in company, replied, "Madam, I have but ninepence in ready money, but I can draw for a thousand pounds." To this Boswell rejoined that Goldsmith had a great deal of gold in his cabinet, but was always taking out his purse.

"Yes, sir," chuckled Johnson, "and that so often an empty purse."

By the time Johnson arrived at the club, however, his angry feelings had subsided, and his native generosity and sense of justice had got the uppermost. He found Goldsmith in company with Burke, Garrick, and other members, but sitting silent and apart, "brooding," as Boswell says, "over the reprimand he had received." Johnson's good heart yearned towards him; and knowing his placable nature, "I 'll make Goldsmith forgive me," whispered he; then, with a loud voice, "Dr. Goldsmith," said he, "something passed to-day where you and I dined, — *I ask your pardon.*" The ire of the poet was extinguished in an instant, and his grateful affection for the magnanimous though sometimes overbearing moralist rushed to his heart. "It must be much from you, sir," said he, "that I take ill!" "And so," adds Boswell, "the difference was over, and they were on as easy terms as ever, and Goldsmith rattled away as usual." We do not think these stories tell to the poet's disadvantage, even though related by Boswell.

Goldsmith, with all his modesty, could not be ignorant of his proper merit, and must have felt annoyed at times at being undervalued and elbowed aside by light-minded or dull men, in their blind and exclusive homage to the literary autocrat. It was a fine reproof he gave to Boswell on one occasion, for talking of Johnson as entitled to the honor of exclusive superiority. "Sir, you are for making a monarchy what should be a republic." On another occasion, when he was conversing in company with great vivacity, and apparently to the satisfaction of those around him, an honest Swiss who sat near, one George Michael Moser, keeper of the Royal Academy, perceiving Dr. Johnson rolling himself as if about to speak, exclaimed, "Stay, stay! Toctor Shonson is going to say something." "And are you sure, sir," replied

Goldsmith, sharply, "that *you* can comprehend what he says?"

This clever rebuke, which gives the main zest to the anecdote, is omitted by Boswell, who probably did not perceive the point of it.

He relates another anecdote of the kind on the authority of Johnson himself. The latter and Goldsmith were one evening in company with the Rev. George Graham, a master of Eton, who, notwithstanding the sobriety of his cloth, had got intoxicated "to about the pitch of looking at one man and talking to another." "Doctor," cried he, in an ecstasy of devotion and good-will, but goggling by mistake upon Goldsmith, "I should be glad to see you at Eton." "I shall be glad to wait upon you," replied Goldsmith. "No, no!" cried the other, eagerly; "'t is not you I mean, Doctor *Minor*, 't is Doctor *Major* there." "You may easily conceive," said Johnson, in relating the anecdote, "what effect this had upon Goldsmith, who was irascible as a hornet." The only comment, however, which he is said to have made, partakes more of quaint and dry humor than bitterness. "That Graham," said he, "is enough to make one commit suicide." What more could be said to express the intolerable nuisance of a consummate *bore?*

We have now given the last scenes between Goldsmith and Johnson which stand recorded by Boswell. The latter called on the poet, a few days after the dinner at Dilly's, to take leave of him prior to departing for Scotland; yet, even in this last interview, he contrives to get up a charge of "jealousy and envy." Goldsmith, he would fain persuade us, is very angry that Johnson is going to travel with him in Scotland, and endeavors to persuade him that he will be a dead weight "to lug along through the Highlands and Hebrides." Any one else, knowing the character and habits

of Johnson, would have thought the same; and no one but Boswell would have supposed his office of bear-leader to the *ursa major* a thing to be envied.[1]

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. What sentence in the chapter most highly indicates Irving's admiration and esteem for Goldsmith? Is there anything in Irving's own life to make him naturally sympathetic with Goldsmith?

[1] One of Peter Pindar's (Dr. Wolcot) most amusing *jeux d'esprit* is his congratulatory epistle to Boswell on this tour of which we subjoin a few lines.

"O Boswell, Bozzy, Bruce, whate'er thy name,
Thou mighty shark for anecdote and fame;
Thou jackal, leading lion Johnson forth,
To eat M'Pherson 'midst his native north;
To frighten grave professors with his roar,
And shake the Hebrides from shore to shore.
. . . . . .
Bless'd be thy labors, most adventurous Bozzy,
Bold rival of Sir John and Dame Piozzi;
Heavens! with what laurels shall thy head be crown'd!
A grove, a forest, shall thy ears surround!
Yes! whilst the Rambler shall a comet blaze,
And gild a world of darkness with his rays,
Thee, too, that world with wonderment shall hail,
A lively, bouncing cracker at his tail!"

CHAPTER XLII

Project of a Dictionary of Arts and Sciences — Disappointment — Negligent Authorship — Application for a Pension — Beattie's Essay on Truth — Public Adulation — A High-minded Rebuke.

The works which Goldsmith had still in hand being already paid for, and the money gone, some new scheme must be devised to provide for the past and the future, — for impending debts which threatened to crush him, and expenses which were continually increasing. He now projected a work of greater compass than any he had yet undertaken : a Dictionary of Arts and Sciences on a comprehensive scale, which was to occupy a number of volumes. For this he received promise of assistance from several powerful hands. Johnson was to contribute an article on ethics ; Burke, an abstract of his "Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful," an essay on the Berkeleyan system of philosophy, and others on political science ; Sir Joshua Reynolds, an essay on painting ; and Garrick, while he undertook on his own part to furnish an essay on acting, engaged Dr. Burney to contribute an article on music. Here was a great array of talent positively engaged, while other writers of eminence were to be sought for the various departments of science. Goldsmith was to edit the whole. An undertaking of this kind, while it did not incessantly task and exhaust his inventive powers by original composition, would give agreeable and profitable exercise to his taste and judgment in selecting, compiling, and arranging, and he calculated to diffuse over the whole the acknowledged graces of his style.

He drew up a prospectus of the plan, which is said by Bishop Percy, who saw it, to have been written with uncommon ability, and to have had that perspicuity and elegance for which his writings are remarkable. This paper, unfortunately, is no longer in existence.

Goldsmith's expectations, always sanguine respecting any new plan, were raised to an extraordinary height by the present project; and well they might be, when we consider the powerful coadjutors already pledged. They were doomed, however, to complete disappointment. Davies, the bibliopole of Russell Street, lets us into the secret of this failure. "The booksellers," said he, "notwithstanding they had a very good opinion of his abilities, yet were startled at the bulk, importance, and expense of so great an undertaking, the fate of which was to depend upon the industry of a man with whose indolence of temper and method of procrastination they had long been acquainted."

Goldsmith certainly gave reason for some such distrust by the heedlessness with which he conducted his literary undertakings. Those unfinished, but paid for, would be suspended to make way for some job that was to provide for present necessities. Those thus hastily taken up would be as hastily executed, and the whole, however pressing, would be shoved aside and left "at loose ends," on some sudden call to social enjoyment or recreation.

Cradock tells us that on one occasion, when Goldsmith was hard at work on his "Natural History," he sent to Dr. Percy and himself, entreating them to finish some pages of his work which lay upon his table, and for which the press was urgent, he being detained by other engagements at Windsor. They met by appointment at his chambers in the Temple, where they found everything in disorder, and costly books lying scattered about on the tables and on the floor; many of the books on natural history which he had

recently consulted lay open among uncorrected proof-sheets. The subject in hand, and from which he had suddenly broken off, related to birds. "Do you know anything about birds?" asked Dr. Percy, smiling. "Not an atom," replied Cradock; "do you?" "Not I. I scarcely know a goose from a swan; however, let us try what we can do." They set to work and completed their friendly task. Goldsmith, however, when he came to revise it, made such alterations that they could neither of them recognize their own share. The engagement at Windsor, which had thus caused Goldsmith to break off suddenly from his multifarious engagements, was a party of pleasure with some literary ladies. Another anecdote was current, illustrative of the carelessness with which he executed works requiring accuracy and research. On the 22d of June he had received payment in advance for a "Grecian History" in two volumes, though only one was finished. As he was pushing on doggedly at the second volume, Gibbon, the historian, called in. "You are the man of all others I wish to see," cried the poet, glad to be saved the trouble of reference to his books. "What was the name of that Indian king who gave Alexander the Great so much trouble?" "Montezuma," replied Gibbon, sportively. The heedless author was about committing the name to paper without reflection, when Gibbon pretended to recollect himself, and gave the true name, Porus.

This story, very probably, was a sportive exaggeration; but it was a multiplicity of anecdotes like this and the preceding one, some true and some false, which had impaired the confidence of booksellers in Goldsmith as a man to be relied on for a task requiring wide and accurate research, and close and long-continued application. The project of the "Universal Dictionary," therefore, met with no encouragement, and fell through.

The failure of this scheme, on which he had built such spacious hopes, sank deep into Goldsmith's heart. He was still further grieved and mortified by the failure of an effort made by some of his friends to obtain for him a pension from government. There had been a talk of the disposition of the ministry to extend the bounty of the crown to distinguished literary men in pecuniary difficulty, without regard to their political creed: when the merits and claims of Goldsmith, however, were laid before them, they met no favor. The sin of sturdy independence lay at his door. He had refused to become a ministerial hack when offered a *carte blanche* by Parson Scott, the cabinet emissary. The wondering parson had left him in poverty and "*his garret*," and there the ministry were disposed to suffer him to remain.

In the mean time Dr. Beattie comes out with his "Essay on Truth," and all the orthodox world are thrown into a paroxysm of contagious ecstasy. He is cried up as the great champion of Christianity against the attacks of modern philosophers and infidels; he is fêted and flattered in every way. He receives at Oxford the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law, at the same time with Sir Joshua Reynolds. The King sends for him, praises his Essay, and gives him a pension of two hundred pounds.

Goldsmith feels more acutely the denial of a pension to himself when one has thus been given unsolicited to a man he might without vanity consider so much his inferior. He was not one to conceal his feelings. "Here 's such a stir," said he one day at Thrale's table, "about a fellow that has written one book, and I have written so many!"

"Ah, Doctor!" exclaimed Johnson, in one of his caustic moods, "there go two-and-forty sixpences, you know, to one guinea." This is one of the cuts at poor Goldsmith in which Johnson went contrary to head and heart in his love for

saying what is called a "good thing." No one knew better than himself the comparative superiority of the writings of Goldsmith; but the jingle of the sixpences and the guinea was not to be resisted.

"Everybody," exclaimed Mrs. Thrale, "loves Dr. Beattie, but Goldsmith, who says he cannot bear the sight of so much applause as they all bestow upon him. Did he not tell us so himself, no one would believe he was so exceedingly ill-natured."

He told them so himself because he was too open and unreserved to disguise his feelings, and because he really considered the praise lavished on Beattie extravagant, as in fact it was. It was all, of course, set down to sheer envy and uncharitableness. To add to his annoyance, he found his friend, Sir Joshua Reynolds, joining in the universal adulation. He had painted a full-length portrait of Beattie decked in the doctor's robes in which he had figured at Oxford, with the "Essay on Truth" under his arm and the angel of truth at his side, while Voltaire figured as one of the demons of infidelity, sophistry, and falsehood, driven into utter darkness.

Goldsmith had known Voltaire in early life; he had been his admirer and his biographer; he grieved to find him receiving such an insult from the classic pencil of his friend. "It is unworthy of you," said he to Sir Joshua, "to debase so high a genius as Voltaire before so mean a writer as Beattie. Beattie and his book will be forgotten in ten years, while Voltaire's fame will last forever. Take care it does not perpetuate this picture to the shame of such a man as you." This noble and high-minded rebuke is the only instance on record of any reproachful words between the poet and the painter; and we are happy to find that it did not destroy the harmony of their intercourse.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. What are the most desirable graces of style? [See also question 1 on Chapter XI.]

2. Goldsmith's carelessness as a writer.

3. Why did Goldsmith's project for a "Universal Dictionary" fail?

4. Why did not Goldsmith receive a pension from the Crown? If he had received one should you think less highly of him?

5. Has Goldsmith's estimate of Voltaire's fame been justified? [Consult teacher of French.]

CHAPTER XLIII

Toil without Hope — The Poet in the Green-Room; In the Flower-Garden; At Vauxhall; Dissipation without Gayety — Cradock in Town; Friendly Sympathy; A Parting Scene; An Invitation to Pleasure.

Thwarted in the plans and disappointed in the hopes which had recently cheered and animated him, Goldsmith found the labor at his half-finished tasks doubly irksome from the consciousness that the completion of them could not relieve him from his pecuniary embarrassments. His impaired health, also, rendered him less capable than formerly of sedentary application, and continual perplexities disturbed the flow of thought necessary for original composition. He lost his usual gayety and good-humor, and became, at times, peevish and irritable. Too proud of spirit to seek sympathy or relief from his friends, for the pecuniary difficulties he had brought upon himself by his errors and extravagance, and unwilling, perhaps, to make known their amount, he buried his cares and anxieties in his own bosom, and endeavored in company to keep up his usual air of gayety and unconcern. This gave his conduct an appearance of fitfulness and caprice, varying suddenly from moodiness to mirth, and from silent gravity to shallow laughter; causing surprise and ridicule in those who were not aware of the sickness of heart which lay beneath.

His poetical reputation, too, was sometimes a disadvantage to him; it drew upon him a notoriety which he was not always in the mood or the vein to act up to. "Good heavens, Mr. Foote," exclaimed an actress at the Haymarket Theatre, "what a humdrum kind of man Dr. Goldsmith appears in our green-room compared with the figure

he makes in his poetry!" "The reason of that, madam," replied Foote, "is because the Muses are better company than the players."

Beauclerc's letters to his friend, Lord Charlemont, who was absent in Ireland, give us now and then an indication of the whereabout of the poet during the present year. "I have been but once to the club since you left England," writes he; "we were entertained, as usual, with Goldsmith's absurdity." With Beauclerc everything was absurd that was not polished and pointed. In another letter he threatens, unless Lord Charlemont returns to England, to bring over the whole club, and let them loose upon him to drive him home by their peculiar habits of annoyance; — Johnson shall spoil his books; Goldsmith shall *pull his flowers;* and last, and most intolerable of all, Boswell shall — talk to him. It would appear that the poet, who had a passion for flowers, was apt to pass much of his time in the garden when on a visit to a country-seat, much to the detriment of the flower-beds and the despair of the gardener.

The summer wore heavily away with Goldsmith. He had not his usual solace of a country retreat; his health was impaired and his spirits depressed. Sir Joshua Reynolds, who perceived the state of his mind, kindly gave him much of his company. In the course of their interchange of thought, Goldsmith suggested to him the story of Ugolino, as a subject for his pencil. The painting founded on it remains a memento of their friendship.

On the 4th of August we find them together at Vauxhall, at that time a place in high vogue, and which had once been to Goldsmith a scene of Oriental splendor and delight. We have, in fact, in the "Citizen of the World," a picture of it as it had struck him in former years and in his happier moods. "Upon entering the gardens," says the Chinese philosopher, "I found every sense occupied with more than

expected pleasure: the lights everywhere glimmering through the scarcely moving trees; the full-bodied concert bursting on the stillness of the night; the natural concert of the birds in the more retired part of the grove, vying with that which was formed by art; the company gayly dressed, looking satisfaction, and the tables spread with various delicacies, — all conspired to fill my imagination with the visionary happiness of the Arabian law-giver, and lifted me into an ecstasy of admiration."[1]

Everything now, however, is seen with different eyes; with him it is dissipation without pleasure; and he finds it impossible any longer, by mingling in the gay and giddy throng of apparently prosperous and happy beings, to escape from the carking care which is clinging to his heart.

His kind friend, Cradock, came up to town towards autumn, when all the fashionable world was in the country, to give his wife the benefit of a skilful dentist. He took lodgings in Norfolk Street, to be in Goldsmith's neighborhood, and passed most of his mornings with him. "I found him," he says, "much altered and at times very low. He wished me to look over and revise some of his works; but, with a select friend or two, I was more pressing that he should publish by subscription his two celebrated poems of the 'Traveller' and the 'Deserted Village,' with notes." The idea of Cradock was, that the subscription would enable wealthy persons, favorable to Goldsmith, to contribute to his pecuniary relief without wounding his pride. "Goldsmith," said he, "readily gave up to me his private copies, and said, 'Pray do what you please with them.' But whilst he sat near me, he rather submitted to than encouraged my zealous proceedings.

"I one morning called upon him, however, and found him infinitely better than I had expected; and, in a kind of

[1] Citizen of the World, letter lxxi.

exulting style, he exclaimed, 'Here are some of the best of my prose writings; *I have been hard at work since midnight*, and I desire you to examine them.' 'These,' said I, 'are excellent indeed.' 'They are,' replied he, 'intended as an introduction to a body of arts and sciences.'"

Poor Goldsmith was, in fact, gathering together the fragments of his shipwreck — the notes and essays, and memoranda collected for his dictionary; and proposed to found on them a work in two volumes, to be entitled "A Survey of Experimental Philosophy."

The plan of the subscription came to nothing, and the projected survey never was executed. The head might yet devise, but the heart was failing him; his talent at hoping, which gave him buoyancy to carry out his enterprises, was almost at an end.

Cradock's farewell-scene with him is told in a simple but touching manner.

"The day before I was to set out for Leicestershire, I insisted upon his dining with us. He replied, 'I will, but on one condition, that you will not ask me to eat anything.' 'Nay,' said I, 'this answer is absolutely unkind, for I had hoped, as we are supplied from the Crown and Anchor, that you would have named something you might have relished.' 'Well,' was the reply, 'if you will but explain it to Mrs. Cradock, I will certainly wait upon you.'

"The Doctor found, as usual, at my apartments, newspapers and pamphlets, and with a pen and ink he amused himself as well as he could. I had ordered from the tavern some fish, a roasted joint of lamb, and a tart; and the Doctor either sat down or walked about just as he pleased. After dinner he took some wine with biscuits; but I was obliged soon to leave him for a while, as I had matters to settle prior to my next day's journey. On my return, coffee was ready, and the Doctor appeared more cheerful (for Mrs.

Cradock was always rather a favorite with him), and in the evening he endeavored to talk and remark as usual, but all was force. He stayed till midnight, and I insisted on seeing him safe home, and we most cordially shook hands at the Temple-gate." Cradock little thought that this was to be their final parting. He looked back to it with mournful recollections in after-years, and lamented that he had not remained longer in town at every inconvenience, to solace the poor broken-spirited poet.

The latter continued in town all the autumn. At the opening of the Opera-House, on the 20th of November, Mrs. Yates, an actress whom he held in great esteem, delivered a poetical exordium of his composition. Beauclerc, in a letter to Lord Charlemont, pronounced it very good, and predicted that it would soon be in all the papers. It does not appear, however, to have been ever published. In his fitful state of mind Goldsmith may have taken no care about it, and thus it has been lost to the world, although it was received with great applause by a crowded and brilliant audience.

A gleam of sunshine breaks through the gloom that was gathering over the poet. Towards the end of the year he receives another Christmas invitation to Barton. A country Christmas! — with all the cordiality of the fireside circle, and the joyous revelry of the oaken hall, — what a contrast to the loneliness of a bachelor's chambers in the Temple! It is not to be resisted. But how is poor Goldsmith to raise the ways and means? His purse is empty; his booksellers are already in advance to him. As a last resource, he applies to Garrick. Their mutual intimacy at Barton may have suggested him as an alternative. The old loan of forty pounds has never been paid; and Newbery's note, pledged as a security, has never been taken up. An additional loan of sixty pounds is now asked for, thus increasing

the loan to one hundred; to insure the payment, he now offers, besides Newbery's note, the transfer of the comedy of the "Good-natured Man" to Drury Lane, with such alterations as Garrick may suggest. Garrick, in reply, evades the offer of the altered comedy, alludes significantly to a new one which Goldsmith had talked of writing for him, and offers to furnish the money required on his own acceptance.

The reply of Goldsmith bespeaks a heart brimful of gratitude and overflowing with fond anticipations of Barton and the smiles of its fair residents. "My dear friend," writes he, "I thank you. I wish I could do something to serve you. I shall have a comedy for you in a season or two, at farthest, that I believe will be worth your acceptance, for I fancy I will make it a fine thing. You shall have the refusal. . . . I will draw upon you one month after date for sixty pounds, and your acceptance will be ready money, *part of which I want to go down to Barton with.* May God preserve my honest little man, for he has my heart. Ever,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

And having thus scrambled together a little pocket-money, by hard contrivance, poor Goldsmith turns his back upon care and trouble, and Temple quarters, to forget for a time his desolate bachelorhood in the family circle and a Christmas fireside at Barton.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Mention pathetic incidents in the last days of the broken-spirited Goldsmith.

2. Would a *novel* picturing imaginary incidents of the last days of Goldsmith's life differ in important particulars from a *biography* containing only the facts?

CHAPTER XLIV

A Return to Drudgery; Forced Gayety; Retreat to the Country; The Poem of Retaliation — Portrait of Garrick; Of Goldsmith; Of Reynolds — Illness of the Poet; His Death; Grief of his Friends — A Last Word respecting the Jessamy Bride.

The Barton festivities are over; Christmas, with all its home-felt revelry of the heart, has passed like a dream; the Jessamy Bride has beamed her last smile upon the poor poet, and the early part of 1774 finds him in his now dreary bachelor abode in the Temple, toiling fitfully and hopelessly at a multiplicity of tasks. His "Animated Nature," so long delayed, so often interrupted, is at length announced for publication, though it has yet to receive a few finishing touches. He is preparing a third "History of England," to be compressed and condensed in one volume, for the use of schools. He is revising his "Inquiry into Polite Learning," for which he receives the pittance of five guineas, much needed in his present scantiness of purse; he is arranging his "Survey of Experimental Philosophy," and he is translating the "Comic Romance" of Scarron. Such is a part of the various labors of a drudging, depressing kind, by which his head is made weary and his heart faint. "If there is a mental drudgery," says Sir Walter Scott, "which lowers the spirits and lacerates the nerves, like the toil of a slave, it is that which is exacted by literary composition, when the heart is not in unison with the work upon which the head is employed. Add to the unhappy author's task sickness, sorrow, or the pressure of unfavorable circumstances, and the labor of the bondsman becomes light in comparison." Goldsmith again makes an effort to rally his spirits by going

into gay society. "Our Club," writes Beauclerc to Charlemont, on the 12th of February, "has dwindled away to nothing. Sir Joshua and Goldsmith have got into such a round of pleasures that they have no time." This shows how little Beauclerc was the companion of the poet's mind, or could judge of him below the surface. Reynolds, the kind participator in joyless dissipation, could have told a different story of his companion's heart-sick gayety.

In this forced mood Goldsmith gave entertainments in his chambers in the Temple; the last of which was a dinner to Johnson, Reynolds, and others of his intimates, who partook with sorrow and reluctance of his imprudent hospitality. The first course vexed them by its needless profusion. When a second, equally extravagant, was served up, Johnson and Reynolds declined to partake of it; the rest of the company, understanding their motives, followed their example, and the dishes went from the table untasted. Goldsmith felt sensibly this silent and well-intended rebuke.

The gayeties of society, however, cannot medicine for any length of time a mind diseased. Wearied by the distractions and harassed by the expenses of a town-life, which he had not the discretion to regulate, Goldsmith took the resolution, too tardily adopted, of retiring to the serene quiet, and cheap and healthful pleasures of the country, and of passing only two months of the year in London. He accordingly made arrangements to sell his right in the Temple chambers, and in the month of March retired to his country quarters at Hyde, there to devote himself to toil. At this dispirited juncture, when inspiration seemed to be at an end, and the poetic fire extinguished, a spark fell on his combustible imagination and set it in a blaze.

He belonged to a temporary association of men of talent, some of them members of the Literary Club, who dined together occasionally at the St. James's Coffee-House. At

these dinners, as usual, he was one of the last to arrive. On one occasion, when he was more dilatory than usual, a whim seized the company to write epitaphs on him, as "The late Dr. Goldsmith," and several were thrown off in a playful vein, hitting off his peculiarities. The only one extant was written by Garrick, and has been preserved, very probably, by its pungency: —

> "Here lies poet Goldsmith, for shortness called Noll,
> Who wrote like an angel, but talked like poor poll."

Goldsmith did not relish the sarcasm, especially as coming from such a quarter. He was not very ready at repartee; but he took his time, and in the interval of his various tasks concocted a series of epigrammatic sketches, under the title of "Retaliation," in which the characters of his distinguished intimates were admirably hit off, with a mixture of generous praise and good-humored raillery. In fact the poem, for its graphic truth, its nice discrimination, its terse good sense, and its shrewd knowledge of the world, must have electrified the club almost as much as the first appearance of "The Traveller," and let them still deeper into the character and talents of the man they had been accustomed to consider as their butt. "Retaliation," in a word, closed his accounts with the club, and balanced all his previous deficiencies.

The portrait of David Garrick is one of the most elaborate in the poem. When the poet came to touch it off, he had some lurking piques to gratify, which the recent attack had revived. He may have forgotten David's cavalier treatment of him, in the early days of his comparative obscurity; he may have forgiven his refusal of his plays; but Garrick had been capricious in his conduct in the times of their recent intercourse: sometimes treating him with gross familiarity, at other times affecting dignity and reserve, and assuming airs of superiority; frequently he had been facetious and witty in company at his expense, and lastly

he had been guilty of the couplet just quoted. Goldsmith, therefore, touched off the lights and shadows of his character with a free hand, and at the same time gave a side-hit at his old rival, Kelly, and his critical persecutor, Kenrick, in making them sycophantic satellites of the actor. Goldsmith, however, was void of gall even in his revenge, and his very satire was more humorous than caustic: —

"Here lies David Garrick, describe him who can,
An abridgment of all that was pleasant in man;
As an actor, confess'd without rival to shine;
As a wit, if not first, in the very first line:
Yet, with talents like these, and an excellent heart,
The man had his failings, a dupe to his art.
Like an ill-judging beauty, his colors he spread,
And beplaster'd with rouge his own natural red.
On the stage he was natural, simple, affecting;
'T was only that when he was off he was acting.
With no reason on earth to go out of his way,
He turn'd and he varied full ten times a day:
Though secure of our hearts, yet confoundedly sick
If they were not his own by finessing and trick:
He cast off his friends as a huntsman his pack,
For he knew, when he pleased, he could whistle them back.
Of praise a mere glutton, he swallow'd what came,
And the puff of a dunce he mistook it for fame;
Till his relish, grown callous almost to disease,
Who pepper'd the highest was surest to please.
But let us be candid, and speak out our mind,
If dunces applauded, he paid them in kind.
Ye Kenricks, ye Kellys, and Woodfalls so grave,
What a commerce was yours, while you got and you gave!
How did Grub Street reëcho the shouts that you raised
While he was be-Roscianed and you were be-praised!
But peace to his spirit, wherever it flies,
To act as an angel and mix with the skies:
Those poets who owe their best fame to his skill,
Shall still be his flatterers, go where he will;
Old Shakspeare receive him with praise and with love,
And Beaumonts and Bens be his Kellys above."

This portion of "Retaliation" soon brought a retort from Garrick, which we insert, as giving something of a likeness of Goldsmith, though in broad caricature:—

"Here, Hermes, says Jove, who with nectar was mellow,
Go fetch me some clay — I will make an odd fellow:
Right and wrong shall be jumbled, much gold and some dross,
Without cause be he pleased, without cause be he cross;
Be sure, as I work, to throw in contradictions,
A great love of truth, yet a mind turn'd to fictions;
Now mix these ingredients, which, warm'd in the baking,
Turn'd to *learning* and *gaming*, *religion*, and *raking*.
With the love of a wench let his writings be chaste;
Tip his tongue with strange matter, his lips with fine taste;
That the rake and the poet o'er all may prevail,
Set fire to the head and set fire to the tail;
For the joy of each sex on the world I 'll bestow it,
This scholar, rake, Christian, dupe, gamester, and poet.
Though a mixture so odd, he shall merit great fame,
And among brother mortals be Goldsmith his name;
When on earth this strange meteor no more shall appear,
You, Hermes, shall fetch him, to make us sport here."

The charge of raking, so repeatedly advanced in the foregoing lines, must be considered a sportive one, founded, perhaps, on an incident or two within Garrick's knowledge, but not borne out by the course of Goldsmith's life. He seems to have had a tender sentiment for the sex, but perfectly free from libertinism. Neither was he an habitual gamester. The strictest scrutiny has detected no settled vice of the kind. He was fond of a game of cards, but an unskilful and careless player. Cards in those days were universally introduced into society. High play was, in fact, a fashionable amusement, as at one time was deep drinking; and a man might occasionally lose large sums, and be beguiled into deep potations, without incurring the character of a gamester or a drunkard. Poor Goldsmith, on his advent into high society, assumed fine notions with fine clothes; he

was thrown occasionally among high players, men of fortune who could sport their cool hundred as carelessly as his early comrades at Ballymahon could their half-crowns. Being at all times magnificent in money-matters, he may have played with them in their own way, without considering that what was sport to them to him was ruin. Indeed, part of his financial embarrassments may have arisen from losses of the kind, incurred inadvertently, not in the indulgence of a habit. "I do not believe Goldsmith to have deserved the name of gamester," said one of his contemporaries; "he liked cards very well, as other people do, and lost and won occasionally, but as far as I saw or heard, and I had many opportunities of hearing, never any considerable sum. If he gamed with any one, it was probably with Beauclerc, but I do not know that such was the case."

"Retaliation," as we have already observed, was thrown off in parts, at intervals, and was never completed. Some characters, originally intended to be introduced, remained unattempted; others were but partially sketched — such as the one of Reynolds, the friend of his heart, and which he commenced with a felicity which makes us regret that it should remain unfinished.

"Here Reynolds is laid, and to tell you my mind,
He has not left a wiser or better behind.
His pencil was striking, resistless, and grand;
His manners were gentle, complying, and bland;
Still born to improve us in every part,
His pencil our faces, his manners our heart.
To coxcombs averse, yet most civilly steering,
When they judged without skill he was still hard of hearing;
When they talked of their Raphaels, Correggios, and stuff,
He shifted his trumpet and only took snuff.
By flattery unspoiled" ——

The friendly portrait stood unfinished on the easel; the hand of the artist had failed! An access of a local

complaint, under which he had suffered for some time past, added to a general prostration of health, brought Goldsmith back to town before he had well settled himself in the country. The local complaint subsided, but was followed by a low nervous fever. He was not aware of his critical situation, and intended to be at the club on the 25th of March, on which occasion Charles Fox, Sir Charles Bunbury (one of the Horneck connection), and two other new members were to be present. In the afternoon, however, he felt so unwell as to take to his bed, and his symptoms soon acquired sufficient force to keep him there. His malady fluctuated for several days, and hopes were entertained of his recovery, but they proved fallacious. He had skilful medical aid and faithful nursing, but he would not follow the advice of his physicians, and persisted in the use of James's powders, which he had once found beneficial, but which were now injurious to him. His appetite was gone, his strength failed him, but his mind remained clear, and was perhaps too active for his frame. Anxieties and disappointments which had previously sapped his constitution, doubtless aggravated his present complaint and rendered him sleepless. In reply to an inquiry of his physician, he acknowledged that his mind was ill at ease. This was his last reply; he was too weak to talk, and in general took no notice of what was said to him. He sank at last into a deep sleep, and it was hoped a favorable crisis had arrived. He awoke however, in strong convulsions, which continued without intermission until he expired, on the fourth of April, at five o'clock in the morning; being in the forty-sixth year of his age.

His death was a shock to the literary world, and a deep affliction to a wide circle of intimates and friends; for, with all his foibles and peculiarities, he was fully as much beloved as he was admired. Burke, on hearing the news, burst into

tears. Sir Joshua Reynolds threw by his pencil for the day, and grieved more than he had done in times of great family distress. "I was abroad at the time of his death," writes Dr. M'Donnell, the youth whom when in distress he had employed as an amanuensis, "and I wept bitterly when the intelligence first reached me. A blank came over my heart as if I had lost one of my nearest relatives, and was followed for some days by a feeling of despondency." Johnson felt the blow deeply and gloomily. In writing some time afterwards to Boswell, he observed, "Of poor Dr. Goldsmith there is little to be told more than the papers have made public. He died of a fever, made, I am afraid, more violent by uneasiness of mind. His debts began to be heavy, and all his resources were exhausted. Sir Joshua is of opinion that he owed no less than two thousand pounds. Was ever poet so trusted before?"

Among his debts were seventy-nine pounds due to his tailor, Mr. William Filby, from whom he had received a new suit but a few days before his death. "My father," said the younger Filby, "though a loser to that amount, attributed no blame to Goldsmith; he had been a good customer, and, had he lived, would have paid every farthing." Others of his tradespeople evinced the same confidence in his integrity, notwithstanding his heedlessness. Two sister milliners in Temple Lane, who had been accustomed to deal with him, were concerned when told, some time before his death, of his pecuniary embarrassments. "Oh, sir," said they to Mr. Cradock, "sooner persuade him to let us work for him gratis than apply to any other; we are sure he will pay us when he can."

On the stairs of his apartment there was the lamentation of the old and infirm, and the sobbing of women; poor objects of his charity, to whom he had never turned a deaf ear, even when struggling himself with poverty.

But there was one mourner whose enthusiasm for his memory, could it have been foreseen, might have soothed the bitterness of death. After the coffin had been screwed down, a lock of his hair was requested for a lady, a particular friend, who wished to preserve it as a remembrance. It was the beautiful Mary Horneck — the Jessamy Bride. The coffin was opened again, and a lock of hair cut off; which she treasured to her dying day. Poor Goldsmith! could he have foreseen that such a memorial of him was to be thus cherished!

One word more concerning this lady, to whom we have so often ventured to advert. She survived almost to the present day. Hazlitt met her at Northcote's painting-room, about twenty years since, as Mrs. Gwyn, the widow of a General Gwyn of the army. She was at that time upwards of seventy years of age. Still, he said, she was beautiful, beautiful even in years. After she was gone, Hazlitt remarked how handsome she still was. "I do not know," said Northcote, "why she is so kind as to come to see me, except that I am the last link in the chain that connects her with all those she most esteemed when young — Johnson, Reynolds, Goldsmith — and remind her of the most delightful period of her life." "Not only so," observed Hazlitt, "but you remember what she was at twenty; and you thus bring back to her the triumphs of her youth — that pride of beauty, which must be the more fondly cherished as it has no external vouchers, and lives chiefly in the bosom of its once lovely possessor. In her, however, the Graces had triumphed over time; she was one of Ninon de l'Enclos's people, of the last of the immortals. I could almost fancy the shade of Goldsmith in the room, looking round with complacency."

The Jessamy Bride survived her sister upwards of forty years, and died in 1840, within a few days of completing her eighty-eighth year. "She had gone through all the stages of

life," says Northcote, "and had lent a grace to each." However gayly she may have sported with the half-concealed admiration of the poor awkward poet in the heyday of her youth and beauty, and however much it may have been made a subject of teasing by her youthful companions, she evidently prided herself in after-years upon having been an object of his affectionate regard; it certainly rendered her interesting throughout life in the eyes of his admirers, and has hung a poetical wreath above her grave.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Why does Irving in Chapters XLIII and XLIV emphasize the dreariness of Goldsmith's bachelor life?

2. Is the first paragraph of this chapter unified?

3. Was "the late Dr. Goldsmith" a good pun? [See also question 3, Chapter XI.]

4. The last illness of Goldsmith.

5. Does this chapter rouse in the reader's mind admiration, pity, sympathy, or censure for Goldsmith?

CHAPTER XLV

The Funeral — The Monument — The Epitaph — Concluding Remarks.

In the warm feeling of the moment, while the remains of the poet were scarce cold, it was determined by his friends to honor them by a public funeral and a tomb in Westminster Abbey. His very pall-bearers were designated: Lord Shelburne, Lord Lowth, Sir Joshua Reynolds; the Hon. Mr. Beauclerc, Mr. Burke, and David Garrick. This feeling cooled down, however, when it was discovered that he died in debt, and had not left wherewithal to pay for such expensive obsequies. Five days after his death, therefore, at five o'clock of Saturday evening, the 9th of April, he was privately interred in the burying-ground of the Temple Church; a few persons attending as mourners, among whom we do not find specified any of his peculiar and distinguished friends. The chief mourner was Sir Joshua Reynolds's nephew, Palmer, afterwards Dean of Cashel. One person, however, from whom it was but little to be expected, attended the funeral and evinced real sorrow on the occasion. This was Hugh Kelly, once the dramatic rival of the deceased, and often, it is said, his anonymous assailant in the newspapers. If he had really been guilty of this basest of literary offences, he was punished by the stings of remorse, for we are told that he shed bitter tears over the grave of the man he had injured. His tardy atonement only provoked the lash of some unknown satirist, as the following lines will show: —

> "Hence Kelly, who years, without honor or shame,
> Had been sticking his bodkin in Oliver's fame,
> Who thought, like the Tartar, by this to inherit

His genius, his learning, simplicity, spirit;
Now sets every feature to weep o'er his fate,
And acts as a mourner to blubber in state."

One base wretch deserves to be mentioned, the reptile Kenrick, who, after having repeatedly slandered Goldsmith, while living, had the audacity to insult his memory when dead. The following distich is sufficient to show his malignancy, and to hold him up to execration: —

"By his own art, who justly died,
A blund'ring, artless suicide:
Share, earthworms, share, since now he's dead,
His megrim, maggot-bitten head."

This scurrilous epitaph produced a burst of public indignation, that awed for a time even the infamous Kenrick into silence. On the other hand, the press teemed with tributes in verse and prose to the memory of the deceased; all evincing the mingled feeling of admiration for the author and affection for the man.

Not long after his death the Literary Club set on foot a subscription, and raised a fund to erect a monument to his memory, in Westminster Abbey. It was executed by Nollekens, and consisted simply of a bust of the poet in profile, in high relief, in a medallion, and was placed in the area of a pointed arch, over the south door in Poets' Corner, between the monuments of Gay and the Duke of Argyle. Johnson furnished a Latin epitaph, which was read at the table of Sir Joshua Reynolds, where several members of the club and other friends of the deceased were present. Though considered by them a masterly composition, they thought the literary character of the poet not defined with sufficient exactness, and they preferred that the epitaph should be in English rather than Latin, as "the memory of so eminent an English writer ought to be perpetuated in the language to which his works were likely to be so lasting an ornament."

These objections were reduced to writing, to be respectfully submitted to Johnson, but such was the awe entertained of his frown, that every one shrank from putting his name first to the instrument; whereupon their names were written about it in a circle, making what mutinous sailors call a Round Robin. Johnson received it half graciously, half grimly. "He was willing," he said, "to modify the sense of the epitaph in any manner the gentlemen pleased; *but he never would consent to disgrace the walls of Westminster Abbey with an English inscription.*" Seeing the names of Dr. Warton and Edmund Burke among the signers, "he wondered," he said, "that Joe Warton, a scholar by profession, should be such a fool; and should have thought that Mund Burke would have had more sense." The following is the epitaph as it stands inscribed on a white marble tablet beneath the bust:—

"OLIVARII GOLDSMITH,[1]

Poetæ, Physici, Historici,
Qui nullum ferè scribendi genus
Non tetigit,
Nullum quod tetigit non ornavit:
Sive risus essent movendi,
Sive lacrymæ,
Affectuum potens at lenis dominator:
Ingenio sublimis, vividus, versatilis,

[1] The following translation is from Croker's edition of Boswell's "Johnson":—

"OF OLIVER GOLDSMITH—

A Poet, Naturalist, and Historian,
Who left scarcely any style of writing
Untouched,
And touched nothing that he did not adorn;
Of all the passions,
Whether smiles were to be moved
Or tears,
A powerful yet gentle master;
In genius, sublime, vivid, versatile,

Oratione grandis, nitidus, venustus:
Hoc monumento memoriam coluit
Sodalium amor,
Amicorum fides,
Lectorum veneratio.
Natus in Hibernià Forniæ Longfordiensis,
In loco cui nomen Pallas,
Nov. XXIX. MDCCXXXI.;
Eblanæ literis institutus;
Obiit Londini,
April IV. MDCCLXXIV."[1]

We shall not pretend to follow these anecdotes of the life of Goldsmith with any critical dissertation on his writings; their merits have long since been fully discussed, and their station in the scale of literary merit permanently established. They have outlasted generations of works of higher power and wider scope, and will continue to outlast succeeding generations, for they have that magic charm of style by which works are embalmed to perpetuity. Neither shall we attempt a regular analysis of the character of the poet, but will indulge in a few desultory remarks in addition to those scattered throughout the preceding chapters.

Never was the trite, because sage apophthegm, that "The child is father to the man," more fully verified than in the case of Goldsmith. He is shy, awkward, and blundering in

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In style, elevated, clear, elegant—
The love of companions,
The fidelity of friends,
And the veneration of readers,
Have by this monument honored the memory.
He was born in Ireland,
At a place called Pallas,
[In the parish] of Forney, [and county] of Longford,
On the 29th Nov., 1731,
Educated at [the University of] Dublin,
And died in London,
4th April, 1774."

[1] Not correct. The true date of birth was 10th Nov. 1728, as given on p. 6.

childhood, yet full of sensibility; he is a butt for the jeers and jokes of his companions, but apt to surprise and confound them by sudden and witty repartees; he is dull and stupid at his tasks, yet an eager and intelligent devourer of the travelling tales and campaigning stories of his half military pedagogue; he may be a dunce, but he is already a rhymer; and his early scintillations of poetry awaken the expectations of his friends. He seems from infancy to have been compounded of two natures, one bright, the other blundering; or to have had fairy gifts laid in his cradle by the "good people" who haunted his birthplace, the old goblin mansion on the banks of the Inny.

He carries with him the wayward elfin spirit, if we may so term it, throughout his career. His fairy gifts are of no avail at school, academy, or college: they unfit him for close study and practical science, and render him heedless of everything that does not address itself to his poetical imagination and genial and festive feelings; they dispose him to break away from restraint, to stroll about hedges, green lanes, and haunted streams, to revel with jovial companions, or to rove the country like a gypsy in quest of odd adventures.

As if confiding in these delusive gifts, he takes no heed of the present nor care for the future, lays no regular and solid foundation of knowledge, follows out no plan, adopts and discards those recommended by his friends, at one time prepares for the ministry, next turns to the law, and then fixes upon medicine. He repairs to Edinburgh, the great emporium of medical science, but the fairy gifts accompany him; he idles and frolics away his time there, imbibing only such knowledge as is agreeable to him; makes an excursion to the poetical regions of the Highlands; and having walked the hospitals for the customary time, sets off to ramble over the Continent, in quest of novelty rather than knowledge.

His whole tour is a poetical one. He fancies he is playing the philosopher while he is really playing the poet; and though professedly he attends lectures and visits foreign universities, so deficient is he on his return, in the studies for which he set out, that he fails in an examination as a surgeon's mate; and while figuring as a doctor of medicine, is outvied on a point of practice by his apothecary. Baffled in every regular pursuit, after trying in vain some of the humbler callings of commonplace life, he is driven almost by chance to the exercise of his pen, and here the fairy gifts come to his assistance. For a long time, however, he seems unaware of the magic properties of that pen: he uses it only as a makeshift until he can find a *legitimate* means of support. He is not a learned man, and can write but meagrely and at second-hand on learned subjects; but he has a quick convertible talent that seizes lightly on the points of knowledge necessary to the illustration of a theme: his writings for a time are desultory, the fruits of what he has seen and felt, or what he has recently and hastily read; but his gifted pen transmutes everything into gold, and his own genial nature reflects its sunshine through his pages.

Still unaware of his powers he throws off his writings anonymously, to go with the writings of less favored men; and it is a long time, and after a bitter struggle with poverty and humiliation, before he acquires confidence in his literary talent as a means of support, and begins to dream of reputation.

From this time his pen is a wand of power in his hand, and he has only to use it discreetly, to make it competent to all his wants. But discretion is not a part of Goldsmith's nature; and it seems the property of these fairy gifts to be accompanied by moods and temperaments to render their effect precarious. The heedlessness of his early days; his disposition for social enjoyment; his habit of throwing the

present on the neck of the future, still continue. His expenses forerun his means; he incurs debts on the faith of what his magic pen is to produce, and then, under the pressure of his debts, sacrifices its productions for prices far below their value. It is a redeeming circumstance in his prodigality that it is lavished oftener upon others than upon himself: he gives without thought or stint, and is the continual dupe of his benevolence and his trustfulness in human nature. We may say of him as he says of one of his heroes, "He could not stifle the natural impulse which he had to do good, but frequently borrowed money to relieve the distressed; and when he knew not conveniently where to borrow, he has been observed to shed tears as he passed through the wretched suppliants who attend his gate." . . . "His simplicity in trusting persons whom he had no previous reasons to place confidence in, seems to be one of those lights of his character which, while they impeach his understanding, do honor to his benevolence. The low and the timid are ever suspicious; but a heart impressed with honorable sentiments, expects from others sympathetic sincerity."[1]

His heedlessness in pecuniary matters, which had rendered his life a struggle with poverty even in the days of his obscurity, rendered the struggle still more intense when his fairy gifts had elevated him into the society of the wealthy and luxurious, and imposed on his simple and generous spirit fancied obligations to a more ample and bounteous display.

"How comes it," says a recent and ingenious critic, "that in all the miry paths of life which he had trod, no speck ever sullied the robe of his modest and graceful Muse. How amidst all that love of inferior company, which never to the last forsook him, did he keep his genius so free from every touch of vulgarity?"

[1] Goldsmith's Life of Nash.

We answer that it was owing to the innate purity and goodness of his nature; there was nothing in it that assimilated to vice and vulgarity. Though his circumstances often compelled him to associate with the poor, they never could betray him into companionship with the depraved. His relish for humor and for the study of character, as we have before observed, brought him often into convivial company of a vulgar kind; but he discriminated between their vulgarity and their amusing qualities, or rather wrought from the whole those familiar pictures of life which form the staple of his most popular writings.

Much, too, of this intact purity of heart may be ascribed to the lessons of his infancy under the paternal roof; to the gentle, benevolent, elevated, unworldly maxims of his father, who "passing rich with forty pounds a year," infused a spirit into his child which riches could not deprave nor poverty degrade. Much of his boyhood, too, had been passed in the household of his uncle, the amiable and generous Contarine; where he talked of literature with the good pastor, and practised music with his daughter, and delighted them both by his juvenile attempts at poetry. These early associations breathed a grace and refinement into his mind and tuned it up, after the rough sports on the green, or the frolics at the tavern. These led him to turn from the roaring glees of the club, to listen to the harp of his cousin Jane; and from the rustic triumph of "throwing sledge," to a stroll with his flute along the pastoral banks of the Inny.

The gentle spirit of his father walked with him through life, a pure and virtuous monitor; and in all the vicissitudes of his career we find him ever more chastened in mind by the sweet and holy recollections of the home of his infancy.

It has been questioned whether he really had any religious feeling. Those who raise the question have never considered well his writings; his "Vicar of Wakefield," and his

pictures of the Village Pastor, present religion under its most endearing forms, and with a feeling that could only flow from the deep convictions of the heart. When his fair travelling companions at Paris urged him to read the Church Service on a Sunday, he replied that "he was not worthy to do it." He had seen in early life the sacred offices performed by his father and his brother with a solemnity which had sanctified them in his memory; how could he presume to undertake such functions? His religion has been called in question by Johnson and by Boswell: he certainly had not the gloomy hypochondriacal piety of the one, nor the babbling mouth-piety of the other; but the spirit of Christian charity, breathed forth in his writings and illustrated in his conduct, give us reason to believe he had the indwelling religion of the soul.

We have made sufficient comments in the preceding chapters on his conduct in elevated circles of literature and fashion. The fairy gifts which took him there were not accompanied by the gifts and graces necessary to sustain him in that artificial sphere. He can neither play the learned sage with Johnson, nor the fine gentleman with Beauclerc; though he has a mind replete with wisdom and natural shrewdness, and a spirit free from vulgarity. The blunders of a fertile but hurried intellect, and the awkward display of the student assuming the man of fashion, fix on him a character for absurdity and vanity which, like the charge of lunacy, it is hard to disprove, however weak the grounds of the charge and strong the facts in opposition to it.

In truth, he is never truly in his place in these learned and fashionable circles, which talk and live for display. It is not the kind of society he craves. His heart yearns for domestic life; it craves familiar, confiding intercourse, family firesides, the guileless and happy company of children; these bring out the heartiest and sweetest sympathies of his nature.

"Had it been his fate," says the critic we have already quoted, "to meet a woman who could have loved him, despite his faults, and respected him despite his foibles, we cannot but think that his life and his genius would have been much more harmonious; his desultory affections would have been concentrated, his craving self-love appeased, his pursuits more settled, his character more solid. A nature like Goldsmith's, so affectionate, so confiding — so susceptible to simple, innocent enjoyments — so dependent on others for the sunshine of existence, does not flower if deprived of the atmosphere of home."

The cravings of his heart in this respect are evident, we think, throughout his career; and if we have dwelt with more significancy than others upon his intercourse with the beautiful Horneck family, it is because we fancied we could detect, amid his playful attentions to one of its members, a lurking sentiment of tenderness, kept down by conscious poverty and a humiliating idea of personal defects. A hopeless feeling of this kind — the last a man would communicate to his friends — might account for much of that fitfulness of conduct, and that gathering melancholy, remarked, but not comprehended by his associates, during the last year or two of his life; and may have been one of the troubles of the mind which aggravated his last illness, and only terminated with his death.

We shall conclude these desultory remarks with a few which have been used by us on a former occasion. From the general tone of Goldsmith's biography, it is evident that his faults, at the worst, were but negative, while his merits were great and decided. He was no one's enemy but his own; his errors, in the main, inflicted evil on none but himself, and were so blended with humorous and even affecting circumstances, as to disarm anger and conciliate kindness. Where eminent talent is united to spotless virtue, we are

awed and dazzled into admiration, but our admiration is apt to be cold and reverential; while there is something in the harmless infirmities of a good and great, but erring individual, that pleads touchingly to our nature; and we turn more kindly towards the object of our idolatry, when we find that, like ourselves, he is mortal and is frail. The epithet so often heard, and in such kindly tones, of "poor Goldsmith," speaks volumes. Few, who consider the real compound of admirable and whimsical qualities which form his character, would wish to prune away its eccentricities, trim its grotesque luxuriance, and clip it down to the decent formalities of rigid virtue. "Let not his frailties be remembered," said Johnson; "he was a very great man." But, for our part, we rather say, "Let them be remembered," since their tendency is to endear; and we question whether he himself would not feel gratified in hearing his reader, after dwelling with admiration on the proofs of his greatness, close the volume with the kind-hearted phrase, so fondly and familiarly ejaculated, of "POOR GOLDSMITH."

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

1. Is Irving's attitude to Kenrick justifiable?

2. The incident of the Round Robin. Where in recent American history has the Round Robin been used?

3. Anecdotes of the life of Goldsmith. Is Irving's biography anything more than a series of anecdotes?

4. What drove Goldsmith to the use of his pen?

5. Analysis of Goldsmith's character.

6. Goldsmith's fairy gifts.

7. The epitaph by Johnson. Would it better have been written in English?

GENERAL TOPICS

1. How does a biography such as Irving's "Oliver Goldsmith" or Boswell's "Life of Johnson" differ in scope and in method of treatment from an essay such as Macaulay's on Goldsmith or Carlyle's on Burns?

2. Is there anything in Goldsmith's own life that corresponds with the chapter in "The Vicar of Wakefield" on the vicar's experiences in prison?

3. What were some of the clubs to which Goldsmith belonged during his life? Why had he a fondness for clubs? Where did these associations meet?

4. Goldsmith's experiences as a teacher. From your point of view as a student, does teaching seem an easy occupation?

5. Enumerate Goldsmith's different dwelling places in London, and give incidents connected with his residence at each.

6. Prepare a five-minute talk on clubs and coffee-houses of the eighteenth century in London. [*Hint.* — After you have brought your material together it would be well to prepare a little outline containing the main divisions of your talk, as a help in case you should become embarrassed and forget what comes next.]

7. Periodical publications of the eighteenth century. [Let Chapter XVII be the starting point for working up this subject.]

8. Goldsmith's relations with his publisher, Newbery.

9. Make a collection from Irving's biography of the best ten anecdotes about Goldsmith.

10. Give a detailed account, made up from references here and there in the biography, of the influence of the Jessamy Bride on Goldsmith. [First prepare careful outline.]

11. Goldsmith as a talker.

12. What instances of repetition of thought are to be found in Irving's "Oliver Goldsmith"?

13. Comment on the rhetorical quality *proportion* as seen in Irving's "Oliver Goldsmith." (*a*) How much space relatively is given

to the years 1728–1758, 1758–1768, 1768–1773, 1774? (*b*) Compare the amount of space devoted to the years from one to thirty, with the number of pages treating of the life from thirty to forty.

14. Write a biography of Goldsmith, grouping your material in four or five paragraphs, each of a page or two in length, and preserving, as far as possible, the proportionate scale of treatment adopted by Irving. Then reduce your four or five paragraphs to a single paragraph of *exactly* one hundred words. Observe closely the nature of the matter that you find must be cut out.

15. Explain what Goldsmith did for the drama.

16. The profession of the playwright in the eighteenth century.

17. Influence of Goldsmith on succeeding novelists.

18. Mention three novelists of the eighteenth century and tell something of the nature of the work of each.

19. Early English dictionaries.

20. The difficulties and pleasures of travel during the time of Goldsmith.

21. Characteristics of the form of literature called the *essay* as written about 1750.

22. Life at Dublin or Oxford or Cambridge University a hundred and fifty years ago. Were there any colleges in America at this time?

23. The life and work of an eighteenth-century curate as presented in Goldsmith's works.

24. Find in this volume and elsewhere details about the life and personality of the following men, and prepare a ten-minute talk on Goldsmith's friends and acquaintances during the last ten years of his life: Samuel Johnson, Joshua Reynolds, Edmund Burke, Bennet Langton, Topham Beauclerc, David Garrick, Sir John Hawkins, James Boswell, Charles Fox, Thomas Percy, Hugh Percy (Duke of Northumberland), John and Francis Newbery, George Colman, William Hogarth, George III, William Blackstone, Augustus Toplady, Samuel Foote, Joseph Cradock, and Joseph Warton.

25. Divide the material of the biography into eight or ten chapters instead of forty-five, giving an appropriate title for each of your proposed chapters. [Consider the advisability of making time and place the basis for the division. Notice, for example, the titles of some of

Charles Dudley Warner's chapters in his "Life of Irving": "Boyhood," "Manhood," "In Spain," "Return to America," etc.] .

26. Locate on map in article on London in Johnson's "Universal Cyclopædia": Islington, Covent Garden, Temple, Temple Bar, Newgate, Holborn, and Ludgate Hill. Are there detailed maps of London in any other reference books to which you have access?

27. Run through the Notes and select those which point out indications of hasty, slipshod writing by Irving. Jot down any other indications of this sort that are to be found in the biography. What good features of Irving's style more than counterbalance occasional inaccuracies in sentence structure and in use of words?

28. Name the works of Goldsmith from which Irving has made quotations in his biography.

29. Make an outline of Goldsmith's life as teacher, as medical man, and as writer.

30. Complete the following geographical outline of Doctor Goldsmith's life, with appropriate divisions and subdivisions.

A. Ireland.
  a. Born at Pallas, 1728.
  b. Scene of his boyhood.
    1. Farm near Lissoy.
    2. Description of household.
  c. Education.
    1. Mistress Elizabeth Delap.
    2. Paddy Byrne.
    3. Rev. Mr. Griffin, etc..
B. Scotland.
C. The Continent.
D. England.

NOTES

The Notes include comments on the diction of Irving, with an eye to stimulating the pupil to more work of this sort for himself. The study of vocabulary is unending, and should be continued throughout the school course till the habit of weighing the value of words has become second nature. In the notes on proper names, more attention has been paid to names of persons, places, and books that could not be found in the reference volumes of a small school library than to words which can readily be looked up in an encyclopedia or a dictionary of names. Biographical details, for instance, regarding men like Burke, Johnson, Gibbon, Sterne, Addison, and other famous English writers, are omitted because the student can find abundance of such material in any history of English literature. It is not the aim of the present edition to do the pupil's work for him. Information is given, however, where needed.

PAGE 4. **the beautiful apostrophe.** In *Life and Letters of Irving*, by P. M. Irving, Vol. III, page 160, will be found the following translation of the apostrophe:

> "Thou art my master, and my teacher thou;
> It was from thee and thee alone, I took
> That noble style for which men honor me."

Because of this tribute of admiration a reviewer, at the time of the first publication of Irving's *Oliver Goldsmith: A Biography*, called Irving a self-acknowledged imitator of Goldsmith. Irving in commenting on this review said to his nephew Pierre that he was never conscious of an attempt to write after any model; he believed his style to be as much his own as if Goldsmith had never written anything.

7 31. the original of his "Auburn." See the discussion of this point in the note which Irving appends to Chapter XXVIII.

10 3. hornbook. Good specimens of hornbooks are rare. Occasionally a collection of facsimiles of these early children's primers is on exhibition at one of the New York publishing houses. Why the hornbook is so called may be learned from the dictionary.

10 15. wars of Queen Anne's time. For the name Queen Anne, see an encyclopedia or an English history, or else question your history teacher. Similarly look up in an encyclopedia other proper names in

the biography, such as Æsop, in this chapter, if you feel that you can understand Irving's idea better by knowing to what the proper name refers.

11 3. **gauge.** This term is of especial interest in connection with the life of a British poet whose troubles were even more pressing than those of Goldsmith, *i.e.* Robert Burns. For instance, observe the use of the word in the following sentence from Carlyle's *Essay on Burns*: "And this was he for whom the world found no fitter business than quarreling with smugglers and vintners, computing excise dues upon tallow, and *gauging* ale barrels." The note at the bottom of page 72 of Ginn & Company's edition of Carlyle's *Burns* contains a clear explanation of the meaning of "gauge." If once understood in this connection, the word will hereafter have literary associations for you, and will seem more than a mere dictionary word.

13 17. **living.** A term used in the Church of England either with reference to the office of a person who received certain church revenues in return for performing various duties, or with reference to the revenue itself. When a living was in the gift of the king it was called a "crown-living" (Murray's *New English Dictionary*).

18 28. **entered Trinity College.** Black, in his *Goldsmith*, page 11, records that though Oliver managed somehow or other to pass the necessary examination he was the last in the list.

18 31. **sizer.** Sometimes spelled *sizar*. In the fifth paragraph of the life of Goldsmith by Macaulay, first printed in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* in 1856, will be found the following additional explanation of "sizar": "The sizars paid nothing for food and tuition, and very little for lodging; but they had to perform some menial services from which they have long been relieved. They swept the court; they carried up the dinner to the fellows' table, and changed the plates and poured out the ale of the rulers of the society."

20 14. **exact sciences.** Name three exact sciences. Why should mathematics be called an *exact* science in contrast with biology? Consult your teachers of those subjects.

22 17. **gownsman.** Though the students of American universities customarily wear gowns only in the senior year or at Commencement time, the distinction between town and gown is still maintained. At one of the universities of New York, for example, there is a flourishing Town and Gown Club.

25 16. **27th of February, 1749, O. S.** The abbreviation O. S. stands for Old Style. When the Julian calendar was replaced by the Gregorian in England by Act of Parliament which went into effect in 1752, eleven

days had to be omitted, so that the third day of September, 1752, for instance, was called the fourteenth. The 27th of February, 1749, Old Style, would thus be equivalent to the 10th of March, New Style. It is this change of calendars which causes the frequent puzzling difference in dates of English history for events between the years 1582, when the New Style was inaugurated by Pope Gregory XIII, and 1751, when England adopted the New Style. Why the eleven days had to be omitted is explained in Newcomb and Holden's *Astronomy*, page 254.

33 7. **ship bound for America.** Robert Burns also planned escape from the troubles of life by a voyage to America. See, for instance, Carlyle's striking sentence about Burns after he had lost his "character for sobriety": "He sees no escape but the saddest of all: *exile from his loved country* to a country in every sense inhospitable and abhorrent to him." Coleridge and Southey were two other English poets who planned to emigrate to America.

34 12. **Cerberus.** The three-headed dog which in Greek mythology guarded the entrance to the Lower World.

38 6. **the Temple.** Compare the phrase in the second paragraph of Chapter XXIX, "a student in the Temple," and the reference to Goldsmith's window in the Temple, Chapter XXVI. The Temple was in two parts, the Inner Temple and the Middle Temple. These groups of buildings belonged originally to the Knights Templars, but in the course of time came to be occupied, with the king's sanction, by lawyers, who formed themselves into societies of the inns of court; the name Temple remained. "These societies are no Corporations, nor have any judicial power over their Members, but have certain Orders among themselves, which, by Consent, have the Force of Laws. For slight Offences, they are only excommoned, that is, put out of Commons; which is, not to eat with the rest in their Halls. And for greater, they lose their Chambers, and are expelled the House." (Page 135, Vol. I, *The History and Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster, Borough of Southwark and Parts Adjacent*, published in London, 1774.) Many quaint details of much interest are to be found in this old history. One of the treasures is a fascinating big yellow-stained map of the London of 1733.

The region of the Temple was not confined to lawyers and law students. On the second floor of No. 2, Brick Court, in the Middle Temple district, Goldsmith died. He had furnished the rooms lavishly with £400 obtained for *The Good-natured Man*. Near a paved walk that leads along the north side of the Round Church of the Temple to

the Master's House, is the simple monument inscribed, "Here lies Oliver Goldsmith." (Compare Chapter XLV, first paragraph.)

40 34. **brandered chop.** A chop broiled on a brander or gridiron. The Scotch and North of England word "brander" is shortened from Middle English *brandire*, meaning "brand-iron." What common English words are of the same origin as "brandered"? In *English Etymology*, Kluge and Lutz omit "brander."

42 6. **the question of ghosts.** In 1762 the story of a ghost that haunted a house in Cock Lane gained general belief. Boswell in his *Life of Johnson* maintains that Johnson was one of those who detected the imposture. The basis for the story of the ghost was the noises started in a dwelling on Cock Lane for the amusement of the occupants and then kept up in order to gull the public. (See also Chapter XIII of Irving's *Goldsmith*.)

43 9. **turnspit-dog.** Formerly dogs were used in treadmills to turn the pointed rod on which meat was fixed before a fire to be turned and roasted. The practice of having animals like sheep, horses, and dogs furnish the power for the running of different machines is still to be observed in some regions. A pet sheep or dog sometimes now turns a churn, and horses in a treadmill make the buzz saw whirl for the cutting of wood.

44 19. **say nothing.** In his description of the Dutch lover in *Tales of a Traveller*, Irving writes: "This youngster [Dirk Waldron] gradually became an intimate visitor of the family. He talked little, but he sat long. He filled the father's pipe when it was empty, gathered up the mother's knitting-needle or ball of worsted when it fell to the ground: stroked the sleek coat of the tortoise-shell cat, and replenished the teapot for the daughter from the bright copper kettle that sang before the fire. All these quiet little offices may seem of trifling import; but when true love is translated into Low Dutch, it is in this way that it eloquently expresses itself." The luminous sentence, "He talked little, but he sat long," could scarcely be improved upon. In fact, the whole passage shows Irving's characteristically quiet humor at its best. Try to decide what is the difference between Goldsmith's humor as seen in his letter to Bryanton, Chapter IV, and Irving's humor as illustrated in the selection quoted above.

45 11. **fair.** An unusual substantive; compare, "None but the brave deserve the fair."

46 25. **the Highlands.** This region of Scotland is the scene of Sir Walter Scott's poem *The Lady of the Lake*.

49 11. **La Mancha.** Compare a similar allusion in Chapter III. Don Quixote de La Mancha is the Spanish gentleman who sets forth with

his squire, Sancho Panza, in search of adventures, and who enjoys plenty of excitement in the course of his travels. *Don Quixote* is the title of the book in which these absurd fictitious adventures are recorded. The story was written in the early part of the seventeenth century by Cervantes, a Spanish author, who, like Samuel Johnson, was once imprisoned for debt.

51 19. **well-clothed vegetable.** In the third paragraph of "Wolfert Webber," Irving himself dubbed a Hollander a vegetable: "The Webber dynasty continued in uninterrupted succession. . . . The eldest son succeeded to the looks, as well as the territory, of his sire; and, had the portraits of this line of tranquil potentates been taken, they would have presented a row of heads marvellously resembling in shape and magnitude the vegetables over which they reigned."

51 28. **Strephon.** A lover, the name being taken from a character in Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*.

55 1. **Versailles.** Distant eleven miles from Paris. Here the French kings, Louis XIII, XIV, XV, and XVI, resplendently garbed and attended by the beauties of France, held court in their famous royal palace during the period of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. With Versailles are connected many of the most striking incidents of French history. It was to Versailles, for instance, that the French rabble rushed on the fifth and sixth of October, 1789, when the Revolution had begun; and it was here that the Revolutionists of France first became conscious that the persons of their king and queen were not sacred. See the histories of this period, or *Tableaux de la Revolution Française*, an historical French reader (G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1884).

55 26. **Voltaire.** See Lippincott's *Biographical Dictionary*, page 2408, column *a*: "In 1755 he [Voltaire] established himself at Ferney, near Geneva, in Switzerland." Since Voltaire was near Geneva, Goldsmith could not have made his acquaintance in Paris at this time. Dobson comments on the blunder, page 37 of the *Memoir*, and page 40 of the *Life*.

56 34. **illy.** Because the word "ill" is properly either an adjective or an adverb, and because "illy," a later coinage, has no real function in language, careful writers avoid "illy" and use instead "ill." J. M. Hart, in his *Handbook of English Composition*, calls "illy" a useless and incorrect word, which ought to be rejected from one's vocabulary.

58 14. **Padua.** The University of Padua, which dates back to the thirteenth century, is one of the oldest and most distinguished universities on the Continent. It is particularly celebrated for its work in medicine. Goldsmith, according to painstaking researches made a few

years ago, probably did not receive a degree at Padua. Irving is cautious on this point, you observe. He merely remarks that Goldsmith "is said to have taken his medical degree" at this university.

60 16. **thesis.** As here used, "thesis" means "proposition," subject for debate, condensed statement of principles to be defended by argument. Frequently the word is used to mean the development of some line of thought in a written treatise submitted at college in satisfaction of a requirement for graduation.

61 8. **"Adventures of a Strolling Player."** Read Irving's sketches entitled "Buckthorne" and "The Strolling Manager" in *Tales of a Traveller*.

62 31. **may I die of an anodyne necklace.** Equivalent to, "may I be hanged." An *anodyne* is a drug which relieves or ends pain. A *necklace*, that is, a rope around the neck, would end pain for good. The language is of course figurative.

62 32. **Newgate.** This was originally the western gate of London wall, was afterward a prison for criminals of the county of Middlesex, and was retained until recently as a city jail, though only for transient prisoners. A late dispatch from London to one of the New York newspapers announces that a magnificent new Central Criminal Court Building is to be erected on the site of Newgate Prison. (Compare note, page 89, line 6.)

63 14. **bolster.** That is, pillow. The word is gradually passing from use. Compare Milton's *Comus:*

> "Perhaps some cold bank is her bolster now,
> Or 'gainst the rugged bark of some broad elm
> Leans her unpillowed head, fraught with sad fears."

63 28. **Bankside, Southwark.** A suburban neighborhood of London on the south bank of the Thames. The Globe Theater, where Shakespeare acted, was situated there.

64 6. **precarious assistance from his pen.** Goldsmith only shared the lot of other writers of the time. Macaulay gives in his *Johnson* a vivid picture of the struggles of that author during his early years in London.

64 28. **Æsculapius.** The god of medicine in Greek mythology.

65 33. **ignorant of Arabic.** A characteristic touch showing Goldsmith's extremely impractical nature. Certain rough Arabic, or more precisely, Aramaic writings on the rocks of Mt. Sinai were the subject of much conjecture in Goldsmith's time. These inscriptions were scientifically studied and explained a century later. They were written or engraved on the rocks in the early centuries of the Christian era by the Nabatæans, a people of northern Arabia.

66 4. **teem.** Does the use of this word here indicate poverty in Irving's vocabulary, inasmuch as he used the same word for the same idea three paragraphs back?

68 21. **Whig principles.** Two great political parties — Whigs and Tories — arose about the end of the seventeenth century in England. The Whigs, who professed more liberal principles than the Tories, stood for trade, for the expansion of the influence of England throughout the world by commercial activity. They were for bold and vigorous action in all political matters. From the accession of George I till the early years of George III's reign, they directed, for nearly fifty years, the government of England almost absolutely. The name became gradually disused after about 1832. The Tories, on the other hand, whose strength lay in the country clergy and gentry, believed in the policy of holding closely to old methods, of maintaining the existing order, of leaving customs of long standing undisturbed. They were more powerful than the Whigs in English politics from about 1760 till 1830. From the life and characteristics of Goldsmith as already presented, would he be likely to side enthusiastically with either party?

69 21. ***antiqua mater* of Grub Street.** Compare *The Vicar of Wakefield*, Chapter XXI, third paragraph. *Antiqua mater* means ancient or venerable mother. *Grub Street* was where the poorer writers had their lodgings. By saying that he hailed the "antiquâ mater of Grub Street" with reverence, George Primrose meant, therefore, that he entered reverently upon the profession of writing.

70 8. **literary hack.** References to authors who devoted their energies to the making of perfunctory essays, prefaces, and translations, when orders were given for such by the publishers, are constantly found in the biographies of Johnson, Goldsmith, Steele, Addison, and other seventeenth- and eighteenth-century writers. There are poor authors doing similar work in New York City to-day.

75 25. **clothed in purple and fine linen.** Luke xvi, 19: "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day."

76 6. **garret in the Haymarket.** The Haymarket, which was a London market established in 1644, is now a square in London. This story of Addison's lodgings is told also in Macaulay's *Essay on Addison*, paragraph 53: "Addison then occupied a garret up three pair of stairs, over a small shop in the Haymarket."

76 26. **the Muses.** The Muses in classic mythology were the inspiring goddesses of art, music, science, and literature. Lines 25–30 mean, then, if expressed literally, that poverty often impels a man to begin

writing poetry, and that he usually stays poor while he continues to write poetry. (See page 12, line 14.)

77 21. **Usher.** A scholarly Irish bishop, whose chronology of the Bible was accepted as standard for many years.

78 16. **mountain will not come.** In 1849, the year of the publication of *Oliver Goldsmith*, Irving published *Mahomet and His Successors*. Mahomet or Mohammed was the founder of the religion which is called Mohammedanism. When he announced his system, the Arabs wanted proofs. "Do miracles," said they, "like Moses and Jesus." To this Mohammed replied, "It would be tempting God to do so, and would bring down his anger." Then, urged further, in order to satisfy them, he commanded Mount Safa to come to him. When it did not stir, he said, "God is merciful. Had the mountain obeyed my words, it would have fallen on us to our destruction. *I will therefore go to the mountain*, and thank God he has mercy on a stiff-necked generation." Thus, a proverb often quoted had its origin in this expression of the prophet Mohammed.

79 23. **Raleigh.** During his twelve years of imprisonment in the Tower of London, Raleigh (or Ralegh) wrote his *History of the World*, essays on political subjects of the day, a book on the invention of ships, and one on the art of naval warfare. By all these he hoped to win the favor of King James I, but he only increased the dislike of the king, who thought he discovered treason in the history. Raleigh is said to have thrown the second part of this *History of the World* into the fire because the sale of the first part was not satisfactory. (*Ralegh — His Exploits and Voyages*, by G. M. Towle.)

80 31. **the union.** That is, the formal joining of England and Ireland into one government with a central parliament at London. This union was accomplished by statute adopted in 1800, to go into effect January 1, 1801.

81 7. **Edward Mills.** This is one of the cases where the present edition differs from the first edition (Geo. P. Putnam, 155 Broadway, New York, 1849) and from the Tauchnitz edition (Leipzig, 1850). The edition of 1850 has Wells in every case for Mills; the 1849 edition reads Wells in two places (page 81, line 7, and page 82, line 13), but has Mills elsewhere (page 81, line 21, and page 97, line 10). The passage containing the word does not appear in Irving's original biographical sketch of Goldsmith, viz., *The Life of Goldsmith, with Selections from his Writings*, in two volumes (Harper and Bros., 82 Cliff Street, New York, 1840). Another case where the first edition has not been followed is page 18, line 27, where the earliest text makes Goldsmith enter college in 1747,

but where the Tauchnitz has changed to 1744, which Austin Dobson (*Memoir*, page 13, and *Life*, page 20) considers correct, though Prior and Forster read 1745. A third case is page 47, line 31, where the first edition has Hammel, but where Dobson, probably following the large encyclopedias like Larousse, reads Hamel. One of the most curious blunders found in the first edition and in the Tauchnitz, but corrected here, is in page 54, line 13; the year 1775 obviously ought to be 1755. Still another case is page 145, line 33, where the word Gosford of the first edition has been changed to Gosfield, a well-known place in Essex (see map of London in Century Atlas). Lastly, on page 244, line 30, Carle of the earliest editions has been changed to Carte, the correct form of the name of this historian. Other changes need not be mentioned. Some of the mistakes indicate carelessness or haste on Irving's part; most of the changes are merely the correction of printers' errors. It is advisable to point out on page 86, line 10, a peculiar idiom which may seem at first glance a misprint; and on page 138, line 10, a downright mistake in grammar by Irving, a mistake which has come all the way from the 1840 sketch to the present edition.

83 22. **uncle Contarine.** His death is spoken of in the first paragraph of Chapter VI. Is this consistent with the statement here? (See also the next to the last paragraph in Chapter V.)

85 7. **tacitly.** Is Goldsmith accurate in the use of this word?

85 11. **had rather.** "Had rather" is as correct an expression as "would rather," which some rhetoricians say should be used in preference.

86 14. **Butler and Otway.** Samuel Butler, the author of the celebrated satire of *Hudibras*, and Thomas Otway, author of many plays such as *The Orphan* and *Venice Preserved*. Butler's misfortunes are referred to in the first paragraph of Carlyle's *Essay on Burns*. Otway died in a squalid shop, close to the prison where he spent his last days.

88 4. **coast of Coromandel.** This is the southeastern coast of India. Madras is the principal city. See *Century Dictionary* for unusual meaning of the word "factories."

89 6. **the Old Bailey.** Just as nowadays wretched habitations usually cluster about the city prisons, so in the age of Goldsmith poverty and filth reigned near the jails like Newgate, Fleet, and the Old Bailey, which were all in the same section of the city. A new prison, according to a recent newspaper dispatch from London, is to be built on the site of the Old Bailey.

90 14. **College of Surgeons.** The article on London in Chambers's *Encyclopædia* gives details about this building. It was situated on the

south side of Lincoln's Inn Fields, once the largest public square of London. In the building erected in 1835 are to be seen several pictures by Hogarth and Reynolds.

96 12. **another publication,** *i.e.* "The Club of Queer Fellows" in *Tales of a Traveller*, first published in 1824. The part which precedes the passage quoted in the *Oliver Goldsmith* is of interest as suggesting something disproved by later scholars, that is, that Goldsmith wrote *The Vicar of Wakefield* in Green Arbor Court; and as illustrating further Irving's delightful style in the *Tales of a Traveller:*

"As it was now growing late, we parted for the evening, though I felt anxious to know more of this practical philosopher [Dribble]. I was glad, therefore, when Buckthorne proposed to have another meeting, to talk over old school times, and inquired his schoolmate's address. The latter seemed at first a little shy of naming his lodgings, but suddenly, assuming an air of hardihood — 'Green Arbor Court, sir,' exclaimed he — 'Number — in Green Arbor Court. You must know the place. Classic ground, sir, classic ground! It was there Goldsmith wrote his *Vicar of Wakefield* — I always like to live in literary haunts.'

"I was amused with his whimsical apology for shabby quarters. On our way homeward, Buckthorne assured me that this Dribble had been the prime wit and great wag of the school in their boyish days, and one of those unlucky urchins denominated bright geniuses. As he perceived me curious respecting his old schoolmate, he promised to take me with him in his proposed visit to Green Arbor Court.

"A few mornings afterward he called upon me, and we set forth on our expedition. He led me through a variety of singular alleys, and courts, and blind passages; for he appeared to be perfectly versed in all the intricate geography of the metropolis. At length we came out upon Fleet Market, and traversing it, turned up a narrow street to the bottom of a long steep flight of stone steps, called Breakneck Stairs. These, he told me, led up to Green Arbor Court, and that down them poor Goldsmith might many a time have risked his neck. When we entered the court, I could not but smile to think in what out-of-the-way corners genius produces her bantlings! And the muses, those capricious dames, who, forsooth, so often refuse to visit palaces, and deny a single smile to votaries in splendid studies and gilded drawing-rooms, — what holes and burrows will they frequent to lavish their favors on some ragged disciple!

"This Green Arbor Court I found to be a small square, surrounded by tall and miserable houses," etc., as in the *Oliver Goldsmith*.

Goldsmith lived from 1758 to 1760 in this court (erroneously called Green *Anchor* Court by A. J. C. Hare, Vol. I, p. 169, *Walks in London*). The court began at the upper end of the Old Bailey. Dickens often visited the region with Irving. "I should love to go with you," he writes to Irving, "as I have gone, God knows how often, into Little Britain and Eastcheap and Green Arbor Court and Westminster Abbey."

By pilgrimages to places around which centered memories of Goldsmith, Irving came naturally to a feeling of almost personal regard and admiration for him. This attitude of Irving's is to be kept clearly in mind when one is reading the biography.

99 11. **happiness that man never tastes.** There is a passage of similar thought in Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies:* "But the best romance becomes dangerous, if, by its excitement, it renders the ordinary course of life uninteresting, and increases the morbid thirst for useless acquaintance with scenes in which we shall never be called upon to act."

106 7. **Ishmaelites.** Descendants of Ishmael, son of Abraham. Ishmael and his mother Hagar were driven into the wilderness. Genesis xxi, 14–16: "And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba. And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs. And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against him, and lift up her voice, and wept." An Ishmaelite of the press was therefore a writer who felt himself cast out by public opinion and deprived of his just dues. In applying the term Ishmaelite to Kenrick, the author dealt more gently with him than he deserved. But see page 187, line 24, and page 341, lines 4, 14.

106 28. **St. John's gate.** This still exists in Clerkenwell. It stands now amid mean houses and cheap shops, and is all that is left of a once splendid church. The original Priory of St. John of Jerusalem was founded in the year 1100, and dedicated in 1185 by Heraclius, Patriarch of Jerusalem, who came to England for money to help in one of the crusades. The present gate belongs to the English Knights of St. John, who have established an ambulance station beside it. (W. Besant's *London.*)

107 23. **'Provoked Husband.'** Begun by Vanbrugh, and finished by Cibber, this drama was first played in 1728.

107 31. **caput mortuum.** Literally, "a dead head," then extended to mean something from which all valuable attributes have been taken away.

108 4. **a wit.** Goldsmith's statement that one Saxon word meant both "wit" and "witch" is unwarranted. By Saxon Goldsmith evidently meant Anglo-Saxon or Old English. The Anglo-Saxon word for "witch" was *wicce.* There was no Anglo-Saxon word for "wit," in the sense of a person possessing wit; the Anglo-Saxon (*ze*)*witt* meant "intellect," "understanding"; *wita* meant "wise man," "councillor." (Sweet, *Student's Dictionary of Anglo-Saxon;* and Kluge and Lutz, *English Etymology.*)

111 5. **Bickerstaff.** Isaac Bickerstaff was an Irish dramatist. Do not confuse the name of this actual man of letters with Swift's pseudonym of Bickerstaff.

114 28. **"Great Cham."** Smollett's letter containing this epithet is printed in Boswell's *Life of Johnson*. It can readily be found there by reference to the Index. A little later in this chapter Johnson is called the "Ursa Major" of literature, that is, the Great Bear, a constellation the principal stars of which make the Dipper.

114 32. **Wine-Office Court.** The house, No. 6, Wine-Office Court, where Goldsmith lived, is now shored up and will soon have to be torn down or it will fall itself.

116 8. **George Steevens.** His work as an editor of Shakespeare has been of much service to subsequent editors.

116 14. **Aristophanes of the day.** By the ordinary educated man, Aristophanes, who was a celebrated Greek satiric dramatist, is best remembered on account of his famous frog chorus, in his comedy entitled *The Frogs*, 405 B.C. It is a curious fact that Samuel Foote (1720–1777) should also be best remembered, not because of his satirical powers as a dramatist, in which he somewhat resembled Aristophanes, but because of his nonsense sentences, first published at the sign of the Golden Bladder in Fleet Street, London, in 1760: "So she went out into the garden to get a cabbage leaf to make an apple pie. A bear popped its head into the shop and said, 'What, no soap?' So he died, and she very imprudently married the barber. And the pond-lilies and the gargillies and the little Panjandrum with the great big button on top were present at the wedding, and the children laughed till the gunpowder ran out of the heels of their shoes." Ask your parents if they ever learned anything like this when they were children. The versions differ greatly.

The origin of these nonsense sentences is amusing. Foote frequently attended miscellaneous coffee-house lectures given by one Macklin. At the close of the lectures Foote liked to joke Macklin about things he had said. On one occasion Macklin made the statement that he could learn anything by heart on a single reading. Foote scribbled off the nonsense quoted above, handed it to the lecturer, and was greatly pleased when Macklin confessed it was too much for him. Many of Foote's bright sayings may be found in a little volume of about two hundred pages, *Bon Mots of Samuel Foote and Theodore Hook*, published by J. M. Dent & Co., London, 1894.

119 14. **Aleppo.** See *Macbeth*, Act I, Scene 3, line 7: "Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' the Tiger." Locate Aleppo.

120 23. **"White Conduit House."** In Knight's *Illustrated History of England*, Vol. VII, page 96, there is a picture of the White Conduit House as it was in 1749. It was near Islington, in the suburbs, and was an especial resort of the citizens. (See page 180, line 18, and page 190, line 28.)

122 11. **literary gossipings.** Observe that Irving cites several of these bits of gossip in succeeding paragraphs. This sentence, then, serves as topic sentence for six paragraphs.

124 17. **Mitre Tavern.** The Mitre which was Dr. Johnson's favorite resort stood in Mitre Court, off Fleet Street. There were, however, other Mitre Taverns in London.

126 2. **Hogarth the painter.** Hogarth's paintings gained him great reputation in his day. They aimed to expose the follies of English life of the period. His engravings are also well known. Hogarth's works differ from Reynolds's in method of treatment and nature of subject.

137 9. **Oratorio.** See dictionary and decide whether Goldsmith was qualified to succeed in this kind of composition.

138 33. **quarto form.** The quarto was a book made of sheets which were folded twice, so that each sheet made four leaves. The size of each page was therefore large.

141 19. **guineas.** A guinea has twenty-one shillings, a pound has twenty. (See fourth from the last paragraph in Chapter XLII.)

145 15. **beautiful ballad.** In a ballad, an author tells a story of love or adventure, usually in four-line stanzas. The old ballads in Percy's collection should be looked into, or if Percy's collection is not accessible, the student may be able to find a copy of Gummere's *Old English Ballads*. Almost every one enjoys reading these ballads aloud. Their condensed statements of what happens, their practical English spirit, their rhythmical swing, and their interesting themes combine to make the reading of them enjoyable.

146 32. **strenuously.** As the pupil's vocabulary becomes enlarged and as he gains wider familiarity with different shades of meaning of the same word, certain associations become connected with various words. "Strenuously" has at present many associations. Just what does the word mean?

149 2. **beneath their dignity.** An author dear to boys and girls and to grown people as well, the late Lewis Carroll, whose real name was Charles L. Dodgson, much preferred to be known as the writer of a dry mathematical book than as the creator of the delectable Alice of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through The Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There.*

152 6. **and who.** "And" should join two or more words, phrases, or clauses of equal rank and similar form; it should not join a word or a phrase with a clause. Many writers, however, habitually disregard this rhetorical principle. In this particular passage, for instance, Irving is inaccurate in his construction, because "who had had" is a clause, but "the arbiter of British talent" is not a clause.

152 23. **the great genius of Germany.** Just as Shakespeare is the great literary genius of England, and Hugo of France, so Goethe (1749–1832) is of Germany. His best known work is *Faust*, which has been translated, if not like the *Vicar of Wakefield* into "almost every language," certainly into many languages.

153 20. **and which.** See note above on "and who."

160 16. **the Continental tour.** The university student whose parents were wealthy was ordinarily sent off to the Continent for a tour, usually called the Grand Tour. By this period of travel it was thought that the student gained ease of manner and general knowledge of life. Milton and Gibbon are among the celebrated English authors who in the days of their youth took the Grand Tour.

161 4. **drudging.** Could this word be replaced by another that would fit into the sentence better?

165 21. **Shebbeare.** John Shebbeare (1709–1788) was an English physician, who attained some little celebrity in the eighteenth century by his political writings.

168 33. **Churchill's "Rosciad."** Charles Churchill (1731–1764), at first a curate, gave up this profession at about the age of thirty and for a few years practiced the writing of poetry. His *Rosciad* (1761) pungently satirizes actors and stage managers of the day. The title of the play comes from the name of a celebrated Roman actor, Roscius, contemporary with Cæsar and Cicero.

170 26. **"rare Ben Jonson."** Ben Jonson (1574–1637), a dramatist whom Shakespeare knew, is one of the many English writers unfortunate enough to taste prison life. Like Goldsmith, he traveled on the Continent, serving at one time in Flanders as a soldier. His best plays are *Every Man in his Humour* and *Every Man out of his Humour*. These are distinctly inferior to Shakespeare's dramas from the very fact indicated in the titles; they deal with the manners or humours of people, that is, with special phases of human nature, rather than with human nature as a whole. (Stopford A. Brooke, *English Literature*.)

174 34. **and who.** Compare note on page 152, line 6.

176 14. **Whitehead, the laureate.** A list of the predecessors and successors of Whitehead as poet laureate will be found in Chambers.

William Whitehead held the office from 1757 to 1785. He was a person of no poetical ability. Is the present laureate of England a notable poet?

177 17. **warm.** The meaning of "warm" here can be rendered by a common colloquialism.

179 11. **Tom Davies, the sometime Roscius.** See note on page 168, line 33. Consider what Irving gains by calling Davies a "sometime Roscius," instead of a former actor.

184 31. **books of his tailor.** Further light on this allusion to the tailor's books may be obtained from Mr. Pierre M. Irving's *Life and Letters of Washington Irving:* "Speaking to Mr. Irving of this biography of Goldsmith, soon after its appearance, I asked him if he had introduced any anecdotes not in Prior's or Forster's Life of him. 'No,' playfully, 'I could not invent any new ones; but I have altered the setting, and have introduced — not in their biography — Madame Darblay's anecdote about Boswell and Johnson, which is capital. I have also made more of the Jessamy Bride, *by adverting to the dates in the tailor's bill,* and fixing thereby the dates of certain visits to her."

187 21. **green-rooms.** Rooms near the stage for the use of actors during the intervals of a play. Originally such rooms were decorated in green; hence, according to *Century Dictionary*, the origin of the word "green-room."

189 13. **his ample fortune.** Notice the tone of gentle irony running through this paragraph. Irving does not mean at all, in a literal sense, that he considered Goldsmith's fortune now ample.

190 8. **Blackstone.** Referred to by Burke in his *Speech on Conciliation with America:* "I hear that they have sold nearly as many of Blackstone's Commentaries in America as in England."

191 27. **air of the most perfect familiarity.** Compare the story of Jenkinson's assurance in entertaining Dr. Primrose, *Vicar of Wakefield*, Chapter XIX.

194 10. **book-building.** This does not imply that Goldsmith had learned the printers' and bookbinders' trades. All through the biography Irving speaks in slighting terms of the work which Goldsmith had to do merely for a living as literary job-work, hack work, and book-building. One is reminded continually of Irving's essay, "The Art of Book-Making," in *The Sketch-Book.*

201 12. **his own personal defects.** In constructing a detailed picture of Goldsmith from the items given here and there in the biography, it will be necessary to enumerate all the personal defects in the appearance of poor Noll. What were they?

205 7. **a templar.** See note on "the Temple," page 38, line 6.

206 13. **Ranelagh, Vauxhall.** For explanation of Ranelagh, read Chapter XXXV, fifth from the last paragraph. For further details about Vauxhall, turn to the paper by Addison in the *Spectator* describing Sir Roger de Coverley's visit to Vauxhall; and read also Goldsmith's description of the place in the fifth paragraph of Chapter XLIII. A picture of Ranelagh as it appeared in 1751 will be found in Knight's *History of England*, Vol. VII, page 97; and a picture of Vauxhall in Besant's *London*, page 379.

212 13. **entirely.** Is anything gained by the statement that the "whole" stock was *entirely* exhausted?

216 18. **Colman.** He does not rank with Burke, Johnson, and Reynolds. In his day, however, George Colman was widely known because of his dramas, and more particularly because he was manager of the Covent Garden and Haymarket Theaters. Pages 409–411 of Forster's *The Life and Adventures of Oliver Goldsmith* contain a facsimile of a letter from Goldsmith to Colman.

220 5. **Royal Academy.** Read again the first sentence of the preceding chapter. To be a Royal Academician is still the height of the ambition of many an English artist. Goldsmith's meeting at the dinner and elsewhere with different members of the nobility furnishes one of the striking phases of his life, in contrast to his mingling with the guzzlers of the taverns.

221 3. **one hundred guineas.** Goldsmith received forty pounds for his life of Parnell. According to this scale, ought he to have received more than a hundred guineas for *The Deserted Village?*

228 23. **bays.** Of course this is not to be taken literally. The idea is that honor because of his poetry had come to Goldsmith. Why "bays" has this meaning will be easily found.

232 26. **picktooth.** Like "standerby" and several such words common in eighteenth-century writing, "picktooth" is now used in a different form. What?

238 1. **poet, while living.** A similar thought appears in the first paragraph of Carlyle's *Essay on Burns:* "The inventor of a spinning jenny is pretty sure of his reward in his own day; but the writer of a true poem, like the apostle of a true religion, is nearly as sure of the contrary."

241 7. **a companion-piece.** Irving thinks of the situation as a picture, and so speaks of this canvas as one which would hang well alongside of another incident in Goldsmith's life. Compare the trick played on the young boy Goldsmith, Chapter I, or the Northumberland House story, Chapter XVI.

243 17. **Gray and Mason.** Thomas Gray and William Mason, who were intimate friends, were two of the best poetical judges of the time. Both wrote poetry, and both were of sufficient literary training to give critical opinions on the Chatterton forgeries.

246 17. **a second Boyle.** This was a sweeping compliment to Beauclerc, not merited by his achievements. The name Boyle stands for the great advances in science and learning in the seventeenth century. He was excelled in experimental science only by Lord Bacon.

250 30. **the Jessamy Bride.** A novel called *The Jessamy Bride*, by Mr. Frankfort Moore, was published a few years ago. Though fiction, it gives much that is of interest regarding the kind of man Goldsmith was. Still it is a question whether the student will not find authentic biography, such as Forster's *The Life and Adventures of Oliver Goldsmith*, on the whole, more entertaining than any fiction which deals with the lives of distinguished authors.

255 9. **argumentum ad hominem.** An argument which has its foundations not in logical reasoning but in an appeal to the prejudices or feelings of the persons to whom it is addressed is called an *argumentum ad hominem*. See Jevons, *Elementary Lessons in Logic*, page 178.

262 1. **the reputed author of "Junius."** The question of who really was the author of the political writings signed "Junius" has been the subject of unlimited discussion. The usually accepted view is that Sir Philip Francis was Junius.

263 16. **the late George Colman.** Like his father (Chapter XXVII), who was a member of the Club, Colman the younger wrote many comedies and farces, and was the proprietor of the Haymarket Theater. He died in 1836.

265 12. **"not much larger than Garrick."** The small size of the actor Garrick caused him to be the butt of many similar jokes. Foote seems always to have been on the lookout for a gibe at Garrick. Johnson says that Foote had a small bust of Garrick placed upon his bureau, where he kept his money. "You may be surprised," said Foote, "that I allow him to be so near my gold; but you will observe he has no hands."

267 15. **James's powders.** Goldsmith's persistence in the use of these, to his material injury, is alluded to in Chapter XLIV. They were a preparation originally made by Dr. Robert James (1703–1776), and were thought to be efficacious for diseases accompanied by fever.

268 13. **Croker.** Macaulay and Carlyle wrote reviews of Croker's edition of Boswell's *Life of Johnson*. Macaulay, who hated Croker, said regarding Croker's work as an editor: "A very large proportion

of the two thousand five hundred notes which the editor boasts of having added to those of Boswell consists of the flattest and poorest reflections, reflections such as the least intelligent reader is quite competent to make for himself, and such as no intelligent reader would think it worth while to utter aloud. They remind us of nothing so much as of those profound and interesting annotations which are pencilled by sempstresses and apothecaries' boys on the dog-eared margins of novels borrowed from circulating libraries; 'How beautiful!' 'Cursed prosy!' 'I don't like Sir Reginald Malcolm at all!' 'I think Pelham is a sad dandy.'" Macaulay's final criticism on Croker's edition is particularly cutting: "In truth, the printer and the editor have between them made the book so bad that we do not well see how it could have been worse." Carlyle, though in a less drastic style, also condemned the edition, saying for instance, "the Editor will punctually explain what is already sun-clear."

269 15. **The Stratford jubilee.** At this celebration, 1769, Boswell foolishly tried to recite a poem, but because of his absurd Corsican dress, his pistols, his musket, and his cap bearing the inscription "Paoli and Liberty," was unable to get a hearing. For the allusion to Paoli turn to what Irving says in the seventh paragraph of Chapter XXXIX.

276 24. **and in which.** Compare this construction with the use of "and which" three paragraphs below, and determine why Irving's English is technically correct in one case and not in the other.

290 4. **Ossian Macpherson.** The hostility of James Macpherson (1738–1796) to the whole Johnson clique and thus possibly to Goldsmith in particular on the occasion of the first presentation of *She Stoops to Conquer*, was due to Johnson's maintaining that Macpherson's so-called translations of the works of Ossian, a Gaelic poet of the third century, were not really translations of freshly discovered poems, but were original compositions by Macpherson. Because of these translations, which gained him much notoriety, Macpherson is dubbed *Ossian* Macpherson by Irving.

292 15. **a slight palliation.** Goldsmith received, according to William Black (*Goldsmith*, English Men of Letters Series), from *She Stoops to Conquer*, nearly five hundred pounds from the three benefits or "author's nights."

297 6. **inroads upon private life.** Much personal chitchat in the newspapers of the present day has no justifiable function.

297 32. **Mrs. Williams.** Among the queer dependents who quartered themselves upon Johnson, Mrs. Anna Williams, as she is called in Boswell's *Johnson*, was perhaps chief. Irving refers to the same person in

Chapter XIII when he speaks of *Miss* Williams. A sentence from a letter of Dr. Johnson at the time of Mrs. Williams's death shows, perhaps, why Johnson admitted her to a "critical conference" over Goldsmith's letter: "Had she had good humor and prompt elocution, *her universal curiosity and comprehensive knowledge* would have made her the delight of all that knew her" (Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, Vol. II, p. 447, T. Y. Crowell & Co., New York and Boston). Boswell says that she was "a woman of more than ordinary talents" (I, 129), and that she made tea with sufficient dexterity notwithstanding her blindness, though her manner of seeing whether the cups were full or not was a little peculiar, since she had to poke her finger down the side till it touched the tea, in order to tell how much more to pour in (I, 346).

299 9. **Miss Burney.** One of three women writers of England who have gained lasting celebrity, the other two being Jane Austen and George Eliot. Miss Frances Burney (Madam D'Arblay) published anonymously at the age of twenty-six a novel, *Evelina*, which immediately won enthusiastic praise from Burke and Johnson. Burke, indeed, sat up all night to read it. Madam D'Arblay, because of the wide popularity of this novel, is often called Evelina Burney.

303 18. **Jacobitism.** After King James II, a member of the Stuart family, fled to France in 1688, the partisans of his family were called Jacobites, from the Latin word for James, *i.e. Jacobus* (Murray's *New English Dictionary*). Even to-day there are people in England who have not become reconciled to the ruling dynasty, but who consider that a Stuart should be on the English throne. Do not confuse Jacobite with Jacobin, which has an entirely different meaning.

306 27. **the great philologist.** Strictly speaking, Johnson was not a great philologist, for his knowledge of the laws of language development was necessarily limited. Lexicographer, the name used in the next chapter, more adequately describes Johnson's real services in the history of the growth of the English language.

311 25. **Launcelot Gobbo to his dog.** The student will search his *Merchant of Venice* in vain for this allusion. Irving has made a slip. Look rather for the character Launce in Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

313 13. **Mr. Toplady.** Augustus Montague Toplady (1740–1778), vicar of Broad Henbury, Devonshire, is known generally on account of his hymns, such as *Rock of Ages*. His controversial writings are pretty well forgotten.

315 28. **a republic.** The phrase "republic of letters" is common.

318 12. **Berkeleyan system.** Bishop George Berkeley maintained that there is no proof of the existence of matter anywhere except in our

own perceptions. This system of philosophy, called idealism, was developed in *The Principles of Human Knowledge* (1710).

325 6. **whereabout.** Commonly "whereabouts" is used instead of whereabout, though the dictionaries recognize both words as in good standing.

325 25. **Ugolino.** Ugolino della Gherardesca was an Italian soldier who led the inhabitants of Pisa in unsuccessful war with the Genoese and Florentines. He was finally starved in prison with his two sons and two nephews. Yet it happens, strangely enough, that Reynolds did not have this story in mind when he painted the picture, but merely gave the title afterwards as one which seemed appropriate.

328 23. **country Christmas.** Irving's detailed descriptions of Christmas scenes in England should be read in *The Sketch-Book*.

330 4. **dreary bachelor abode.** Irving's several references to the dreariness of Goldsmith's bachelor life are evidently intended to bring out the contrast of what might have been if the poor poet had married the Jessamy Bride.

333 2. **touched off.** Observe that the same verb is used earlier in the paragraph. Is the repetition a blemish in Irving's style?

338 29. **Ninon de L'Enclos.** Anne or Ninon de L'Enclos (1620–1706) was a celebrated French wit and beauty. Her literary taste and judgment were much admired by a coterie of distinguished Frenchmen.

340 11. **the Temple Church.** See note on "the Temple," page 38, line 6.

341 21. **Nollekens** (pronounced nol'e-kenz). Besides the bust of Goldsmith, Joseph Nollekens made busts of Garrick and Sterne, which are considered meritorious works. He was an English sculptor, whose father, a painter of Antwerp, had settled in England. Nollekens was made a member of the Royal Academy in 1772.

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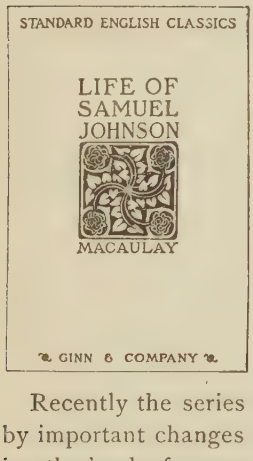

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